

# **Between North and South**

The Episcopal Church in Sudan and the Political Sphere 1945-1972

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## ***Sammendrag***

Denne oppgaven tar for seg forholdet mellom den *Episkopale* kirken i Sudan og de ulike styresmaktene som har styrt landet i perioden 1945-1972. Gjennom denne avgrensingen tar oppgaven for seg en rekke viktige hendelser og politiske utviklinger. Dette strekker seg fra utviklingen av sudansk nasjonalisme, som i 1956 førte til landets selvstendighet etter mer enn femti år under britisk og egyptisk styre, til de ulike myndighetene som styrte landet gjennom perioder med militærkupp, demokratiske valg og revolusjon. Sentralt i dette er også en konflikt mellom nord og sør med etniske, religiøse, kulturelle og politiske dimensjoner, som sendte landet ut i en ødeleggende borgerkrig mellom 1955 og 1972.

Oppgaven tar i bruk en kildesamling som inkluderer samtidige kirkeblader og personlig korrespondanse fra biskopen i Sudan, Oliver Allison. Sammen med historisk forskningslitteratur danner dette en bakgrunn som brukes for å diskutere sentrale aspekter ved kirkens forhold til styresmaktene. Oppgavens første kapitler tar for seg hvordan kirken forholdt seg til Sudans uavhengighet i 1956, og Ibrahim Abbouds militærregime som fra 1958 innførte strenge restriksjoner mot utenlandske misjonærer. Gjennom en analyse av kildematerialet viser oppgaven at Abbouds restriksjoner mot misjonærene i realiteten hadde en forholdsvis liten påvirkning på kirken, ettersom den i etterkant av opphevingen av den britiske separasjonspolitikken mellom nord og sør i 1945 hadde jobbet intensivt med å «sudanisere» kirken, gjennom å aktivt utnevne sudanere i prominente roller, i stedet for å være avhengig av utenlandske misjonærer. Dette gjorde at kirken kunne møte uavhengigheten som en integrert religiøs institusjon i landet, og ikke som en levning fra kolonitiden.

Oppgavens to siste kapitler tar for seg hvordan kirken forholdt seg til den eskalerende konflikten som utviklet seg i sør fra 1955. Her vises det hvordan kirken i 1965 ble splittet i to som et resultat av borgerkrigen, og hvordan biskopen i Khartoum støtte på utfordringer i sitt forhold til myndighetene. Denne perioden preges av en stadig balansegang, der forsøket på å opprettholde et godt forhold til myndighetene ble møtt med anklager om illojalitet fra kirkemedlemmer i sør, og forsøk på å tale i favør av en fredelig løsning kunne bli møtt med anklager om å støtte de sørlige militsgruppene som kjempet mot Khartoum. Samtidig måtte biskopen ta grep for å sikre kirkens videre overlevelse i en periode preget av kuppforsøk og politisk spenning. I forsøket på å etterkomme begge disse partene, havnet kirken med det i en mellomposisjon – mellom nord og sør.

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## ***Abbreviations***

AACC – All African Council of Churches

CMS – Church Missionary Society

ECS – Episcopal Church in Sudan

ICF – Islamic Charter Front

NFP – National Front for Professionals

NUP – National Unionist Party

PDP – People’s Democratic Party

SANU – Sudan African National Unity

SDR – Sudan Diocesan Review

SSLF – Southern Sudan Liberation Front

SSLM – Southern Sudan Liberation Movement

SSPG – South Sudan Provisional Government

UNHCR – United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

WCC – World Council of Churches

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## CHAPTER 1

### Introduction

When the first small party of British missionaries left Khartoum and sailed down the river Nile on December 8<sup>th</sup>, 1905 in a 60-tonne converted houseboat, this represented the first foray of the Anglican Church Missionary Society (CMS) to the little-explored Southern Provinces of the Sudan. Their mission was simple. Ever since the British overthrow of the Mahdi State in 1898, the British government had restricted proselytization in the north in fear of the reaction of the Muslim population. Now, the curtain was lifted over the south, inviting British missionaries to partake in a “*Work of civilization*”, by establishing a system of Mission Centers in the south, providing education, healthcare and evangelism for the ingenious population – as well as founding the Episcopal Church in Sudan (ECS) in the south.<sup>1</sup>

Up until the 1940s the colonial government administered the Southern Provinces as a *closed district*, prohibiting trade between the north and the south, as well as the movement of Sudanese between the two parts of the country. For the church, this policy meant that it operated in two different ways; while the missionaries in the south were exclusively responsible for the development of education and healthcare, the still existent ban on

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<sup>1</sup> de Saram 1992 “Nile Harvest: The Anglican Church in Egypt and the Sudan”, p. 105



proselytizing in the north meant that the ECS mainly ministered to British ex-patriates in the capital, avoiding the prospect of mission work aimed at northern Sudanese.

From the 1930s, the idea of Sudanese nationalism emerged as a political movement, putting pressure on the Condominium government to repeal the isolationist *southern policy*. When this policy was revised in 1945 and 1946, this set about race to accelerate development in the south, an area which many British Administrators saw as severely undeveloped compared to the north. Even though earlier history will be covered in the background chapter, 1945 and the revision of the southern policy represents the starting point for the discussion covered in this thesis. In the same year, the first independent diocese of the Sudan was created, covering both the north and the south. This set about wide-reaching efforts to prepare the church for life in what was increasingly being considered an inevitable outcome: An independent Sudan.

During the period covered in this thesis, the Sudan has gone through enormous political changes. As an independent country, Sudan has had democratically elected presidents. It has been subject of several military coups, resulting in an abolition of the political system, and it suffered a disastrous civil war raging from 1955 to 1972, resulting from an ever-existent conflict between north and south, with ethnic, cultural, religious and political dimensions. Despite the political turmoil, the Episcopal Church have evolved from being a British missionary endeavor associated with the colonial government to becoming an integrated Sudanese church. This thesis will attempt to chronicle the history and development of the ECS in the period of 1945-1972, focusing on the often complex relations between the church and the different governments in power in the country.

### ***Research question***

Ever since the first British missionaries was allowed access to the Sudan, the Episcopal Church in Sudan (ECS) had a complex relationship with its various governments, from the Anglo-Egyptian Condominium to the different political forces ruling in the aftermath of the Sudanese independence in 1956. This thesis will explore how the Episcopal Church dealt with the changing politics of the period from 1946 to 1972, how it related to the governments and

adapted in order to assure the survival of the church. The question this thesis will be based upon is thus:

*How did the Episcopal Church in Sudan relate to the political changes in the country in the period 1945-1972?*

With this as the main question, the thesis will discuss the *nature* of the relationship between the ECS and the various governments in control over the country in the period. Was this relationship primarily marked by continuous “crisis management”, or by pragmatic efforts to gain favor with the successive governments in Khartoum? To answer this question, the thesis will also focus three specific cases that has presented a challenge for the ECS throughout the period:

- a) How did the ECS transition from operating under the Anglo-Egyptian Condominium to independence in 1956?*
- b) How did the ECS relate to the continuous unrest in the Southern Provinces from 1955?*
- c) What role did the ECS have in the process leading up to the Addis Ababa Agreement in 1972?*

The first of these three questions will be explored in chapters 3 and 4, while the subsequent two questions will respectively be explored in chapters 5 and 6.

To cover this, each chapter will give an introduction and explanation of the often complex political developments in Khartoum, which will be used as a basis for the discussion of the ECS’ development in the period, and how it related to the politics of the central government in the country. This thesis is limited to the period between 1945 and 1972. 1945 is chosen as a starting point because this was the year of the creation of the first independent Sudanese diocese, as well as the British revision of the *southern policy*, which began the process of integrating both south and north in the same political system. 1972 is chosen as the end of the scope of the thesis due to this being the year of the finalization of the Addis Ababa agreement, which ended the civil war that was sparked by a mutiny in 1955, and strongly escalated ten years later. The war led to the leading to the destruction and displacement of a large portion of

the population in the Southern Provinces, as well as an almost complete eradication of the ECS in the south. The thesis will also provide a historical background of the developments leading up to its starting point.

### ***Sources and source criticism***

The discussion on the ECS will mainly be based on written accounts from missionaries and members of the church, in addition to material from the personal archive of Bishop Oliver Allison, who served as Archbishop in the Sudan from 1948 to 1976. The literature used in this thesis is divided into two spheres. For sources pertaining to the ECS, the main literary works utilized is *“Nile Harvest: The Anglican Church in Egypt and the Sudan”* by Brian de Saram, and *“But God is Not Defeated: Celebrating the Centenary of The Episcopal Church of the Sudan”*, containing essays from different clergy and church members, edited by Samuel E. Kayaga and Andrew C. Wheeler.

For background, each chapter contains an overview of the political developments in the period described. The main works used for this purpose is *“A History of the Sudan: From the Coming of Islam to the Present Day”* by PM Holt and MW Daly, *“A History of Modern Sudan”* by Robert O. Collins, and *“Politics and Islam in Contemporary Sudan”* by Abdel Salam Sidahmed. A perspective from the southern Sudan has been provided by books such as *“The Politics of the Two Sudans”* by Deng D. Akol Ruay and *“The First Sudanese Civil War”* by Scopas Poggo. In addition to this, several other works are also utilized throughout the thesis.

### ***Archival material***

The main part of the archival material used in this thesis originates from the Sudan archive at the Durham University Library, where the sources were collected in October 2018. This archive was founded in 1957, a year after the Sudanese independence by members of the British Political Service in order to collect and preserve the papers of the administrators that had served in the Sudan, along with those of missionaries, teachers, soldiers and more. Since

1957, the collections have extended beyond the scope of the Anglo-Egyptian Condominium, and now contains material up to the present day.<sup>2</sup>

The resources used from this archive stems from the papers of Oliver C. Allison, who came to the Sudan in 1938, served as assistant Bishop in the Sudan from 1948 to 1953, and Bishop between 1953 to 1974 – in other words during the whole period under scrutiny in this thesis. The material in this collection includes personal and church correspondence between 1940 and 1989, newsletters, church reports and minutes of interviews, and different political papers. This material has been very valuable in the work of answering the questions postulated in this thesis; to investigate the relations between the ECS and the different governments in Khartoum, these papers have given an interesting insight into the internal opinions, discussions, actions and strategies that the ECS expressed and utilized in relation to the historical and political developments of the period.

Another source that has been used in this thesis is the archive of Rex Seán O’Fahey, deposited at the Bergen Global library and archives. Of special interest in this archive has been the collected volumes of the magazine *Sudan Diocesan Review* (SDR), published in English two to three times a year, with a Spring, Autumn and some years a Summer edition. In this collection, every issue between 1949 and 1974 have been available. The Sudan Diocesan Review was founded in 1949 by the, by a British clergy named “Uncle” Harper, supported by the “*Sudan Church Association*”. In its first years the publication acted as a “parish magazine” in the Sudan, informing the British church members of internal church developments, but with the Sudanese independence in 1956, the SDR was relocated to Britain. From this point, the magazine was more aimed at keeping the returning British updated on the developments in the Sudan, as this editorial retrospective from 1978 shows:

It is now almost thirty years since, in what «Uncle» Harper then described as an act of faith, the first number of the Review was published in January 1949. A great deal of water has passed under the bridges of the Niles since then, and conditions, particularly in the Church of the Sudan, have changed almost out of all recognition. What remains, however, is the supporting role of the Sudan Church Association, and of the Review as the expression of its aims and purposes; though it is now much less a «parish magazine»

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.dur.ac.uk/library/asc/sudan/>. WEB: 22.08.19

and much more the channel through which conditions in the Sudan and the needs of an evergrowing Church can be made known to its supporters in this country.<sup>3</sup>

Each issue of SDR contains a number of the same segments, such as an editorial column, travelogues, letters from readers and obituaries. The segment that has been mostly used in this thesis is, however, the “*Bishop’s letter*”, a segment in which the Bishop, from 1953 Oliver Allison, writes about the state of the church and the general developments in the country, mostly dividing his letters in an general overview over recent events in the church, followed by an overview over the status of the different provinces and parishes of the ECS. This segment was recurring in every issue of the SDR from Allison’s enthronement until the end of the scope of this thesis, providing a valuable insight into the workings of the ECS in the period.

It is important to note that since the SDR from 1956 was printed and distributed from Britain, the intended audience for the publication was mostly British members of the Sudan Church Association, and ex-patriates who had served in the Sudan. It was therefore for the most part not intended for Sudanese members of the ECS. What this means is that the magazine largely reflects a British viewpoint of the Sudanese situation. Bishop Allison’s segment does however provide a perspective written from inside the Sudan; it can further be argued that Allison’s position as the highest-ranking member of the ECS means that his words does carry authority as representative for the church itself. The SDR’s location in Britain has also ensured that it could be published regularly throughout the period. At several points throughout Sudan’s post-independence the press and the media were under strict censorship, with the different governments trying to limit the information flow outside the borders of the country. By being based in Britain, the SDR was thus able to publish reports of developments and incidents in the Sudan, often through Bishop Allison’s letters, that would have been censored or otherwise prohibited inside the country.

Even though the SDR was publicly released, Bishop Allison evidently did not consider his letters to the magazine as the same as divulging information to the press, which meant that his letters often were very frank and included information not publicly available. This is for

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<sup>3</sup> Sudan Diocesan Review, Spring 1978, p. 4

example addressed in a personal letter from Allison to the Archbishop in Jerusalem and several other clergy, in which he addressed criticism over having written publicly about the closure of the All Saints Cathedral in Khartoum in 1971, even though the ECS had decided not to report this to the British press before the situation had been resolved. After expressing his surprise at the reaction, Allison further added:

I should have thought that in the light of past years and my determination to keep our readers and supporters informed of the situation from year to year, you would have expected me to comment fairly fully... In my judgement a letter in a Parish magazine or a Diocesan Review is a very different matter from a letter to the Press or an article in the Press: Whether Church or Secular. So I would still hold to our joint decision not to publicise in the British Press, and this decision is still shared by my Sudanese brethren.<sup>44</sup>

### *ECS literature*

In order to provide a chronological history of the ECS' development in the period 1945-1972, this thesis has leaned on several works, mostly written by former missionaries or people personally involved with the ECS. Central in this respect is "*Nile Valley: The Anglican Church in Egypt and the Sudan*" by Brian de Saram, who was a former missionary of over 20 years in the Sudan, and later Africa Secretary of the Church Missionary Society (CMS). De Saram's book provides a detailed overview of the history of the ECS from the first British missionaries until the mid-1970s, and has been a valuable asset in this thesis' attempt to piece together a coherent history of the ECS in the period covered. The sources used by de Saram includes the SDR, but not the archival material of Bishop Allison.

Another book that has been used in this thesis is "*But God is Not Defeated: Celebrating the Centenary of the Episcopal Church of the Sudan 1899-1999*". This book is, as the title implies a celebratory publication marking the first hundred years of the ECS. The book is compiled and edited by Andrew C. Wheeler, an English historian and member of the Church Mission Society, and Samuel E. Kayanga, a Sudanese theologian and teacher. It also contains a number of essays by different Sudanese Christians and others with a connection to the ECS. This book is thus not a chronological rendition of the history of the church, but several of these essays have provided interesting perspectives on different developments inside the church, and a deeper understanding on topics also covered by de Saram. Examples of this is

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<sup>44</sup> Letter from Bishop Allison to Archbishop in Jerusalem and others, 8.12.1971, SAD 809/2/61

Wheeler and Gordon Tibika's essay on "*The Missionary Bishops*", and historian Abe Enosa's two essays "*The Expulsion of the Missionaries from Southern Sudan*" and "*Building Bridges: The ECS Contribution to Peacemaking and Conflict Resolution*", which all have been used throughout the thesis.

As it can be noted, both books, as well as the vast majority of material written about the subject, is authored by persons with a personal affiliation with the church in the Sudan, as former missionaries, clergy, church members or scholars and people otherwise involved in global Anglicanism. To date, no major research has been written from an outside perspective. In the introduction to *Nile Valley*, de Saram explains that the intent of the work is "*to provide the Episcopal Churches in Egypt and the Sudan with a strong historical foundation on which to build for the future and a clear sense of purpose to establish the kingdom of God among the peoples of the Nile Valley*".<sup>5</sup> It can thus be argued that these sources do not necessarily represent a neutral or unbiased rendition of history. While this thesis focuses on ECS' relationship with Khartoum, it is thus also a first study of the church's history from an outside perspective. This thesis does not utilize archival material of Khartoum's view of the political developments in the period; these are provided from an outside perspective, through literature and various historical research. The research question in this thesis thus reflects the ECS' own experience of these political periods as background for analysis. This is reflected in the source material.

### *Sudanese history*

While these two books represent the bulk of the material concerning the history of the ECS, the scope of the thesis further necessitates an overview of the general political history of the Sudan. In order to provide this, two main works on Sudanese history is utilized: "*A History of the Sudan: From the Coming of Islam to the Present Day*" by PM Holt and MW Daly, and "*Modern Sudan*" by Robert Collins. These books are both considered to be some of the most thorough overviews on the subject. However, their focus is slightly different.

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<sup>5</sup> de Saram 1992, cover synopsis

*"A History of the Sudan"* was first published in 1961 by Peter Malcolm Holt and has since established itself as the "standard introduction" to Sudanese history. The book has been revised a number of times since its first publication. Since 1979 the book has been a collaboration with the American historian Martin Daly, who has continued expanding the scope of the book after Holt's death in 2009. In this thesis the sixth edition has been used, published in 2011.<sup>6</sup> The history covered in this book is chronological and starts already in the middle ages. In this thesis the chapters covering the Anglo-Egyptian Condominium, including the development of Sudanese nationalism, and the politics of independent Sudan until Ja'far Nimeiri's presidency has been used.

While Holt and Daly's book provides a general overview over Sudanese history, American historian Robert Collins *"Modern Sudan"* has been used to provide further context and a deeper understanding of the complex internal political developments in the country. Collins' book is similarly to *A History of Sudan* chronological in form, but often provides a deeper and more detailed analysis of the key events in Sudanese political history. For context on the politics of Khartoum, Political and Social Scientist Abdel Salam Sidahmeds *"Politics and Islam in Contemporary Sudan"* has also been used, and in particular his chapter on the background and aftermath of the October Revolution in 1964.

A recurring criticism of especially Holt and Daly's work is its focus on the northern political sphere, where the focus on other societies of the Sudan, especially the south, is mostly included in the context of "subordination" to the north.<sup>7</sup> In order to provide a focus on the intricacies of the Southern Provinces, this thesis has also used several works that apply a southern perspective, including *"The First Sudanese Civil War"* by South Sudanese historian Scopas S. Poggo. This book contains an interesting analysis on background leading up to the state of civil war from 1955, as well as providing a comprehensive overview over the different political and military factions involved in the south in the period. For a detailed account on the south's relation to colonization and national politics from a southern viewpoint, the book *"The Politics of the Two Sudans"* by Deng D. Akol Ruay has been used.

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<sup>6</sup> <https://reviews.history.ac.uk/review/172>, WEB: 24.08.19



In addition to the books mentioned, a number of other works have been used for the purpose of including different perspectives or context. These will be referenced in the bibliography.

### ***Chapter overview***

This thesis will be organized chronologically, with each chapter presenting and discussing a different political period. In order to achieve a discussion in line with the research question, each chapter will begin with an extensive historical context over the political situation and developments in the country within the scope of the chapter; this will subsequently be used as the framework for discussion concerning the ECS' relations with the political sphere.

The first chapter provides an introduction to the topic of this thesis, as well as introducing the research questions that will be discussed. It also provides the sources that will be utilized throughout, both archival and literary, and discusses some questions regarding source criticism in relation to these.

Chapter 2 provides some background material, beginning with a brief overview over the *Anglican Communion* and the history of the Sudan prior to the Anglo-Egyptian Condominium. It then further covers northern politics and Sudanese nationalism under the Condominium up until independence in 1956, as well as the advent of missionary activity in the country.

Chapter 3 takes a step back by focusing on the Southern Provinces in the years leading up to independence, with focus on the reversal of the British *southern policy* in 1945 and 1946. Within this framework, the chapter describes the work of the ECS in the ten years leading up to 1956, ending with a discussion on how the church approached the transition to a united and independent country outside British control.

Chapter 4 concerns the history between 1956 and 1964, in which the country went from a democratically elected government to military rule under General Ibrahim Abboud. This chapter discusses the ECS' relation to Abboud's government in a period characterized by the

nationalization of mission schools and gradual restrictions on missionary activity, eventually leading up to the expulsion of all foreign missionaries from the country in 1964.

Chapter 5 focuses on the First Sudanese Civil War until 1969, in which the southern unrest that had been dormant since the *Torit mutiny* in 1955 was dramatically escalated through government military action in the south in 1965, leading to enormous displacement and loss of human life. In the northern political sphere, the chapter also focuses on the October revolution of 1964 which toppled Abboud's military government. The chapter further discusses the impact of the civil war on the ECS, and the difficult choice facing Bishop Allison on how to achieve good relations with the government in Khartoum, at the same time as he was maneuvering press from political groups in the south.

Chapter 6 begins with the military coup of Ja'far Nimeiri and his Free Officers in 1969, subsequently describing Nimeiri's policies and political opposition, ending with the signing of the Addis Ababa Agreement in 1972. The chapter further discusses the ECS' relation with Nimeiri's government. Finally, the chapter discusses church involvement in the Addis Ababa agreement through the *World Council of Churches* (WCC) and *All African Council of Churches* (AACC), and how the ECS contributed to the deal which finally brought about a cease to the hostilities.

Chapter 7 provides a conclusion, in which the research questions presented in chapter one is revisited within the framework of the discussions provided in chapters 3-6.

*Map: Sudan (1994)*<sup>8</sup>



<sup>8</sup> From: <https://www.mapsland.com/africa/sudan/detailed-political-and-administrative-map-of-sudan-with-roads-railroads-and-major-cities-1994> WEB: 29.08.19

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## CHAPTER 2

### Historical background 1898-1956

#### *From the Turkiya to the Mahdi state*

The areas between the Red Sea and the Atlantic Ocean that medieval Arabic cartographers called *Bilad al-Sudan* has a long and complex historiography, from the Kingdom of Kush (760 BCE-350 CE) via a number of different Kingdoms and sultanates until the present day.<sup>9</sup> The eastern part of the Bilad al-Sudan was from the middle ages Arabized and Islamized through a lengthy process of demographic movements, missionary activities and commercial contacts, and in the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries the Islamic sultanates of *Funj Sinnar* (ca. 1500-1821 CE) and *Fur* (ca. 1600-1916) arose. While the orthodox <sup>10</sup> Sunni tradition also was introduced, the predominant form of Islam that took root in the sultanates was Sufism, due to it being more suited for the nature of daily life in the period than its orthodox counterpart.<sup>11</sup>

Sudan as a geographical entity was brought together in the 1820s by the Turko-Egyptian conquest of the region by Muhammad Ali, Governor of Egypt, who went in with an army under command by his son Isma'il Pasha, consisting of some 4000 troops. The military

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<sup>9</sup> Collins 2008 "Modern Sudan", p. 1

<sup>10</sup> While the term «Orthodox Islam» is debated, it here refers to Orthodox as a counterpoint to «Popular Islam». Warburg uses the term Orthodox «Azharite» Islam (p. 57), from the Al-Azhar Islamic University in Cairo. The Turko-Egyptian government wanted to foster this specific Islam in the population, to stop the influence of groups following popular Islam.

<sup>11</sup> Sidahmed 1996 "Politics and Islam in Contemporary Sudan", p. 5

expedition initially met little resistance and quickly achieved submission from all the Arab tribes in the area, as well as the *Funj*. Isma'il followed his conquest with heavy taxation on the Sudanese, which soon led to much of the Nile Valley revolting against the new regime; only a combination of superior firepower on the Ottoman side and a gradual softening of the tax system eventually contributed to a de-escalation of the situation.<sup>12</sup>

While the first revolt against the *Turkiya*, as the period became known in Sudan, failed, discontent with the regime was dormant. The central state created by the administrators was a foreign structure, bringing together a number of different societies, and from the 1870s the frustration among Sudanese grew as a result of several factors. Firstly, a number of non-Muslim Europeans was put in charge of administering Sudanese territories, bringing with them a bureaucracy that was alien and viewed as corrupt and oppressive by many Sudanese. Secondly, Egypt tried to abolish slavery and slave trade in Sudan; this was met with resentment by the powerful groups involved in the slave trade, which had been an integral part of the Sudanese economy. With a growing opposition to the *Turkiya* in the population, Muhammad Ahmad, the *Mahdi*, a popular religious teacher, took advantage in 1881, and called upon the people to take up arms against the Turks in a “necessary jihad”.<sup>13</sup>

This rebellion was not solely based upon opposition to the abolishment of slavery and oppression from the Turko-Egyptian regime, but also based itself upon a growing sense of apocalyptic expectation of Muslims in the Sudan; Ahmad himself based his position as leader upon having experienced visions that he was the messianic figure of the expected *Mahdi*.<sup>14</sup> Another factor contributing was that Mahdism came from a Sufist tradition. This made them at odds with the government, who advocated orthodox Islam – something that threatened both traditional Sufi religious institutions and tribal authority.<sup>15</sup> Having galvanized the population, Muhammad Ahmad and his followers won a series of decisive victories, including an Egyptian force 10.000 soldiers strong.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Collins 2008, p. 10-13

<sup>13</sup> Voll 2000, in Levtzion and Pouwels, “The History of Islam in Africa” p. 154

<sup>14</sup> Collins 2008, p. 21

<sup>15</sup> Warburg 2003 “Islam, Sectarianism and Politics in Sudan Since the Mahdiyya”, p. 24

<sup>16</sup> Collins 2008, p. 22

By 1885 Mahdist forces controlled most of the northern Sudan, establishing a centralized state. However, the same year Muhammed Ahmad died, which led to a ravaging power struggle, and the coalition that had overthrown the Turkiya immediately started to deteriorate. While it was still able to keep control over the Mahdi State, it was not immune to foreign intervention. In 1882 Britain had occupied Egypt, but were hesitant to spend money that could be used to rebuild Egypt on a costly invasion of Sudan; in 1889 however, the British government suddenly authorized an advance by Egyptian troops into Dongola in north Sudan, which opened the door for further advances into the Mahdi State. From 1896 to 1898 an Anglo-Egyptian army slowly advanced south; and in two decisive battles in 1898 they eradicated the Mahdist forces. In the aftermath of the *Battle of Omdurman* on September 1<sup>st</sup>, where 11.000 Mahdist, and 49 Anglo-Egyptian soldiers was killed, the Mahdi State was finished; the Sudan was now under British and Egyptian control.<sup>17</sup>

### ***The Anglo-Egyptian Condominium***

After the fall of the Mahdist state, questions arose about the future of administration and status of the new territories. While the Egyptian motivation for the campaign was the reconquest of the territories lost by the *Khedive*<sup>18</sup> of Egypt, this view was not shared by the British government. Opinion in Britain recognized the Turko-Egyptian rule as a direct cause of the Mahdist uprising, and the British were not willing for the Sudan to be returned to khedivial rule. The motivation of restoring the former territories of the Khedive did however make it difficult for the British to simply annex the Sudan as a new colony. The Egyptian claims to the Nile Valley had formed the legal cover for the conquest, in a period where France, Belgium and Italy all had a strong colonial presence in the neighboring countries.<sup>19</sup>

Lord Cromer, the British Consul-General of Egypt, acknowledged these factors, and proposed an administrative model based on a shared sovereignty of Britain and Egypt over the conquered territory. This administrative model, by Cromer considered a “hybrid form of

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<sup>17</sup> Holt and Daly 2011 “A History of the Sudan From the Coming of Islam to the Present Day”, p. 96-7

<sup>18</sup> Title stemming from Muhammed Ali’s rule of Egypt and the Sudan, equivalent to the English title of «viceroy».

<sup>19</sup> Holt and Daly 2011, p. 85

government”, was manifested in the Anglo-Egyptian Condominium Agreement of 1899. On the surface this administrative model gave Egypt shared power over the Sudan; even though the country would be administered by the British Governor-General, this position according to the agreement would be appointed and recalled by the Khedive. This, however, would only happen on the advice of the British Government. In reality, the agreement had made the Sudan into a sovereign state where the Governor-General had much greater independence than his colonial counterparts. The administration of the country was solely in British hands. The Governor-General appointed British officers, reporting through the British representative in Cairo to the Foreign Office, which regarded the Sudan with much more indifference than the Colonial Office would have.<sup>20</sup>

While the British and Egyptian flags were both flown together in the Sudan, the British domination became a point of contention in the Egyptian opinion, especially following the First World War.<sup>21</sup> While Sudan played no direct part in the war, opposition was growing in Egypt towards the British occupation. Britain’s declaration of a Protectorate in Egypt in 1914 was seen as a step towards independence at the end of the war, and when this failed to materialize, the public revolted. The Egyptian revolution of 1919 and its consecutive negotiations towards independence reinforced Britain’s strategic interest in Sudan. The British administration feared that the Egyptian movement towards nationalism would spread to the Sudan, and it was deemed vital to remove as many Egyptians as possible from their positions in the country.<sup>22</sup>

The British response to the developments in Egypt was the imposition of Indirect Rule as the system of governance in the Sudan. Circumventing the educated Sudanese elite, which the administration feared would be sympathetic to the causes of Egyptian revolution and ideals of unity in the Nile Valley, the functions of government were instead passed to the traditional tribal authorities. The role of the local British district officers would be as advisors only, interfering as little as possible in tribal affairs, but permitted to preserve law and order and tasked to ensure continued British rule over the country. Indirect rule was a cost-effective

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<sup>20</sup> Collins 2008, p. 33

<sup>21</sup> Holt and Daly 2011, p. 86

<sup>22</sup> Holt and Daly 2011, p. 92

mode of administration, relying on a smaller group of advisors instead of costly officials. Indirect Rule also benefitted the British in other ways. Some British officials already had close relationships with the tribal authorities in the country and trusted their judgement. The relatively new class of educated Sudanese officials was mistrusted both by the British and by many rural Sudanese, causing some British officials to justify their rule as an expression of the *real* Sudanese nationalism, expressing the will of the rural people of Sudan instead of the newfound post-war nationalism on the rise in Egypt.<sup>23</sup> In the immediate aftermath of the First World War, it seemed like these British calculations were correct: The Egyptian revolutionary movement did not immediately spread to the Sudan, and the start of the 1920s passed without major incidents.

### *Religious policies in Anglo-Egyptian Sudan*

The Condominium had several decisions to make while formulating the religious policy of the new administration. Eager to not repeat the mistakes that had led to the Mahdist uprising, the British authorities immediately emphasized the principle of separation between church and state, in the same way it had been enforcing it all through the British Empire.<sup>24</sup> The administration introduced British law, modified to the economic and social situation in the Sudan, but the Governor-General was careful not to appear as interfering with the religion and personal affairs of the Sudanese. January 5<sup>th</sup> of 1899 Lord Cromer assured a group of religious leaders in Omdurman that the British would not impede on their religions and customs. This policy was repeated by Lord Kitchener, the first General-Governor of the Sudan. In a directive to the governors of the Sudanese provinces in 1900, he instructed that they should "*Be careful to see that religious feelings are not in any way interfered with, and that the Mohammedan Religion is respected*".<sup>25</sup>

The British policy of non-interference extended to all affairs of purely religious matter, and Muslims were encouraged to handle religious education and justice in matters concerning personal status. To enforce this, the government empowered traditional tribal leadership, and permitted Muslim leaders to conduct affairs within their own jurisdiction. Cromer also

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<sup>23</sup> Collins 2008, p. 35-6

<sup>24</sup> Warburg 2003, p. 57

<sup>25</sup> Akolawin 1973 "Personal Law in the Sudan: Trends and Developments", p.151



promised that the government would assist and enable building of new mosques in the country and encouraged people to again undertake the pilgrimage to Mecca and Medina, a practice that had been abandoned during the Mahdiyya.<sup>26</sup>

The British policy sought to strengthen what they viewed as orthodox Islam in the country, which may be viewed as an attempt to win the support of the local religious opinion. The reasoning behind this stemmed from a couple of assumptions made on part of the government: Firstly, the administration recognized that “a backward country” like Sudan was liable to an influx of fanatical agitation when the ruling authority is “*not of the same creed as the inhabitants*”, and that the people of the Sudan in particular had an “*peculiar susceptibility*” to religious fanaticism.<sup>27</sup> This perception of fanaticism was based on the example of the Mahdiyya, and the administration immediately enforced sanctions and regulations on the sufi orders of the country. The orders were not allowed to rebuild the tombs of their saints and the mosques that had been destroyed during the Mahdiyya, and the government would not recognize their traditional religious authorities.<sup>28</sup> The administration believed that even minor religious figures could start an uprising, so the government officials were instructed to keep a close watch over local religious leaders and encouraged to act swiftly at any signs of unrest.<sup>29</sup>

This distrust of local traditional religious figures played a big part in the administration’s encouragement of orthodox Islam in the country. In 1901 General-Governor Wingate, who had taken the position in 1899, established the Board of Ulamâs to act as advisors on Islamic affairs. This board consisted of seven members which Wingate considered to be the highest religious authorities on orthodox Islam in the country and was intended to represent the Muslim opinion in religious questions. The board had no direct authority, and the administration considered it a way to keep direct European influence out of Muslim religious affairs. By tying together the religious authorities of the Ulamâ and the administration, the British hoped to maintain stability and win popular support of the Condominium government.<sup>30</sup> The Board was also a way for the administration to curb the religious

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<sup>26</sup> Warburg 2003, s. 57

<sup>27</sup> Voll 1971 “Britain and the ‘Ulama and Popular Islam in the Early Anglo-Egyptian Sudan”, p. 212

<sup>28</sup> Warburg 2003, p. 57-8

<sup>29</sup> Voll 1971, p. 212-3

<sup>30</sup> Voll 1971, p. 215

movements they deemed as heresy and fanaticism. In a message to the Muslims of the Sudan in 1901, approved by the Board, the population was urged to cooperate with the authorities to strengthen the “true Muslim faith”, to give up their superstitions and to desist from following their Sufi leaders.<sup>31</sup>

### *The Southern Provinces*

The southern Sudan has historically been culturally separated from the north. While relations between north Sudan and the Arabian Peninsula have existed since the dawn of history, Arabization of the northern area began in the seventh century, as a direct result of the spread of Islam and Islamization – two processes which has been closely linked in practice and in the minds of the population.<sup>32</sup> These processes were not a result of military conquest, but of a gradual immigration of Muslim Arabs to the Christian kingdoms of Nubia. Having achieved political control over the Central Sudan through a gradual absorption of power, the Islamized Sudanese were able to gain control over more remote areas of the country. But the southern areas remained out of reach. The climate and geography, with tropical humidity, swamps and flies was not suitable for camel breeding, and the northern Arabs did not find the conditions attractive. Because of this, the southern areas of the Sudan remained untouched by the influence of Arabization and Islamization until the 19<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>33</sup>

On this background, the Condominium faced a very different situation in the south than what it had encountered in the north. Firstly, the climate and environment made exploration difficult. The *sudd*,<sup>34</sup> the vast wetland in the northern parts of the south, had been an impenetrable barrier for military conquest since Roman times. The British were only able to navigate military expeditions to the south after 1904, as a result of several sudd-clearing missions. Even after this the conquest of the south was a huge task, which would take over 30 years.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> Warburg 2003, p. 61

<sup>32</sup> Hasan 1985 “Sudan in Africa”, p. 229

<sup>33</sup> Hasan 1985, p. 230

<sup>34</sup> Derived from the Arabic word *sadd*, meaning “barrier” or “obstruction”

<sup>35</sup> Collins 2008, p. 35

Secondly, the people of the south were not, in broad terms, tied together in cultural unity and social cohesion. The Southern society that existed before foreign influence according to Deng (1994) could be depicted as a “web of self-contained tribal entities based on linguistic and traditional ties”, which was further divided into clans.<sup>36</sup> The south constitutes more than 60 distinct ethnic groups of Eastern and Western *Nilotes*, a broad term for the people speaking Nilotic languages. These groups include the two dominant groups the *Dinka* and the *Nuer*, and smaller groups like the *Shilluk* and the *Bari*. The biggest ethnic group outside the Nilotes is the *Azande*.<sup>37</sup> Tribal warfare between these groups has been widespread throughout history, even though neighboring tribes always drew up treaties of co-existence between themselves. This marks a stark contrast with the north, where the social unity of Islamization and Arabization processes had divided the population into religious “fraternities”, *tariqas*, across tribal lines. While tribalism existed in the north during the Condominium, these factors contributed to the point where, by 1935, LF Nadler, an administrator in the Sudan, considered the tribal differences in the northern provinces “mainly superficial”.<sup>38</sup>

Northern slave raids into the southern areas were frequent throughout history; under the Turkiya the practice boomed due to the increased demand for ivory in Victorian Britain, which led to an increased demand for slaves for the purpose of hunting elephants and carrying ivory to the trading posts; by 1860 an estimated 12.000 to 15.000 slaves was sent north every year.<sup>39</sup> Even though the Mahdiyya had not consolidated the south, the Southern Provinces had not been unaffected in this period. As opposition to the prohibition to slavery had been one of the catalysts for the rebellion against the Turkiya, it is not surprising that slavery was pivotal to the Mahdist state affairs and the livelihood of its people.<sup>40</sup>

### *The Southern Policy*

While the administration sought to advance orthodox Islam in the north, they made no such efforts in the south. As the south was not conquered during the Mahdiyya, the British were terrified of the prospect of what it considered “fanatical Islam” spreading to these territories.

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<sup>36</sup> Deng 1994 “The Politics of the Two Sudans”, p. 21

<sup>37</sup> Collins 2008, p. 6-8

<sup>38</sup> Hasan 1985, p. 231-2

<sup>39</sup> Collins 2008, p. 16

<sup>40</sup> Nugud 2013 “Slavery in the Mahdist State (1885-1898)”, p. 61

To combat this, the administration from 1900 developed the so-called “Southern Policy”. This was an attempt to exclude Muslim influence from the Southern Provinces in a number of ways. All Arabic-speaking administrative staff were to be eliminated in favor of southern recruits from the missionary schools. The northern *jellaba* merchant class were progressively denied entry to the provinces in favor of Greek and Syrian traders.<sup>41</sup> Northern Sudanese officials and troops in the South were transferred to the North, replacing them with an Equatoria Corps, consisting of locally recruited southerners under British officers. The administration also discouraged the use of Arabic dress, instead favoring European shirts and pants.<sup>42</sup>

From the 1920s, the British policy became more centered on the prospect of a complete separate administration in the South. In October of 1922 the south was cut off from the north through the promulgation of the “Passport and Permits Ordinance”. This act declared the south as a closed district, which in effect barred any foreigners from other parts of the Sudan entry in the area, and the administrators in the south were no longer required to be involved in the politics of the north and the annual meetings of the Governors in Khartoum. In enforcing this policy, the British administration instigated the creation of a “No-man’s-land” between the north and the south, to prevent contact between the two areas. As a result of this, several settlements on the western border was destroyed, leading to the displacement of around 3000 people.<sup>43</sup>

The imposition of Indirect Rule had different implications in the south than in the north. While approaching the system of Governance in the same way as in the north, the south did not have the same infrastructure, and in many places there were no figures of authority to advise and influence. To rectify this, the British administration in many cases handpicked new chiefs to the tribal societies in the south, contrary to existing practice. From 1930, the administration further expressed the Southern Policy by encouraging tribalism. In January that year the Civil Secretary Harold MacMichael declared the policy of government in the south as

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<sup>41</sup> Deng 1994, p. 39

<sup>42</sup> Collins 2008, p. 35

<sup>43</sup> Deng 1994, p. 39-40

a “series of self-contained racial or tribal units with structure and organization”, based upon indigenous customs, traditional usage and beliefs.<sup>44</sup>

The British had several motivations behind the Southern policy. The imposition of Indirect Rule and the Southern Policy was also, as in the north, a cost-efficient way of running local affairs without an expensive British administration. To justify the Southern policy and enhancing tribalism, the administrators claimed that its intended purpose was to preserve African culture and values, separating the south from the north as a way of preventing outside influence from the customs and cultures of the south.

Critics have since doubted these motivations. Many British officials simply viewed the south as too primitive to be developed, and therefore had to be separated from the north. In the words of LF Nader, a British administrator in the south: “*There is the difference of material culture between the sophisticated Arab and the primitive savage, naked and unashamed, so primitive in some cases that in him we can visualize the early ancestors of mankind*”.<sup>45</sup> Other critics viewed the preservation of the south as a “museum piece” of native culture – a, as Abel Alier put it: “*human zoo for anthropologists, tourists, environmentalists and adventurers from developed economies of Europe to study us, our origin, our plight, the sizes of our skulls and shape and length of customary scars on our foreheads*”.<sup>46</sup>

One of the aims of the occupation of the South had been control over the Nile Valley, and control over the imperial position in the area. It became very important for the British to ward off Egyptian influence over the area in the wake of the Egyptian revolution and the country’s subsequent independence in 1922.<sup>47</sup> While the eradication of the southern slave trade was the main justification for the conquest in the 1900s, the British also wanted to build a bulwark against the spread of Islam in the south. While the encouragement of tribalism and isolation from the north became an efficient way of keeping out Muslim influence, the administration

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<sup>44</sup> Deng 1994, p. 41

<sup>45</sup> Deng 1994, p. 37

<sup>46</sup> Deng 1994, p. 42

<sup>47</sup> Holt and Daly 2011, p. 22

allowed one group to operate and influence in the south, which had not been allowed in the north: Christian missionaries.

### *The beginnings of missionary activities in the Sudan*

With the consolidation of the Condominium in 1898, Christian missionaries were quick to explore the possibilities of expanding to the newly conquered territories in the Sudan. In June 1889, even before the Mahdiyya was decisively toppled in the north, a committee of the Christian Missionary Society (CMS) resolved to “*go forward into the Sudan as soon as the door might be opened*”.<sup>48</sup> In September the same year, the CMS arranged for two missionaries of the Egypt mission to be dispatched to start up missionary activities in the Sudan. General-Governor Kitchener, on the other hand, objected to the notion of mission in the north, and refused the CMS to move forward with their plans. Kitchener deemed the political situation far too sensitive to run the risk of linking the new government with proselytization in the minds of the population. In 1899 the first missionaries, among them Rev. Llewellyn Gwynne were allowed entry to Khartoum, albeit under strong restrictions. The missionaries were allowed to minister to British soldiers, and the same year the first Christmas service was held in the Mahdi’s former house. They were however forbidden to speak to Muslims about matters relating to religion. A Bible Society were also allowed to open a bookshop in Khartoum, but on condition of displaying notices forbidding any attempt to change the religion of the people.<sup>49</sup>

The British policy of non-interference in religious matters was, as we have seen, based on a fear of Mahdism and fanaticism being able to grow among the population. From 1902 to 1904 Rev. Gwynne and the CMS repeatedly petitioned Lord Cromer and Sir Reginald Wingate, who had succeeded Kitchener as Governor-General, for permission to establish institutions in the north, but were told that the Sudan was not yet ready. Cromer however conceded on one important point. In a letter to the CMS in London written in December 1904, Cromer stated that even though the “*time still was distant*” when mission work could be permitted among the Muslim population, he did not have any objections to the establishment of Christian schools in Khartoum, “*provided that parents are warned that instruction in the Christian*

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<sup>48</sup> de Saram 1992, p. 103

<sup>49</sup> de Saram 1992, p. 104

*religion is afforded*". While this admission in effect opened the Sudan to missionary involvement, the next part of the letter opened up another avenue of interest; the southern provinces. The case of the southern provinces was, in Cromers view, widely different. Not only did he not find any reason for restricting missionary activities there, but the Government encouraged the missionaries to co-operate in what Cromer called "*work of civilization*". "*A large and prosperous district is still unoccupied*" he wrote, asking if the CMS were willing to undertake the task of mission in the south. The CMS accepted.<sup>50</sup>

### *Mission in the south*

The CMS were not the only missionary group to set their sights on the vast areas of the south, with both The American Presbyterian mission and the Catholic Verona Fathers eager to establish missions in the area. To combat possible infighting between the Christian denominations, Cromer divided the south into different spheres of influence. The CMS were allocated a vast space of land, stretching from Malakal in the northern part of the province, through the Nile Valley to Equatoria.<sup>51</sup> In December 1905 the first party of missionaries, including three clergy, a doctor, an agriculturalist and a technician, set out from Khartoum, and in January the delegation established its first mission station in Malek, among the ingenious population of the Dinka.<sup>52</sup>

The initial work of the mission station among the Dinka was time-consuming. Archibald Shaw, by 1908 the last remaining of the initial clergy who had arrived at Malek, spent many years among the Dinka, trying to learn their culture and translate the scriptures into the local language. Even with this effort, it took 15 years before the first Dinka converted to Christianity.<sup>53</sup> After having settled in Malek, the CMS spotted the possibilities of a further expansion and the establishment of more mission stations. The area allocated to the missionaries included several other ingenious tribes, and in the next 20 years the CMS

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<sup>50</sup> de Saram 1992, p. 105-6

<sup>51</sup> Wheeler 2015 "God Has Come Amongst Us Slowly and we Didn't Realise It! The Transformation of Anglican Missionary Heritage in Sudan", p. 246

<sup>52</sup> de Saram 1992, p. 108-9

<sup>53</sup> de Saram 1992, p. 112

expanded and opened stations among the people of the Azande, Bari, Nuer, and in the region of Loka.<sup>54</sup>

The objective for the mission stations in the south was to provide services for the ingenious population; education, health care and evangelism. This was a challenge for the missionaries, who had little funding to extend medical services outside limited dispensaries. Education became one of the most important aspects of the mission work. In line with its goal of Indirect Rule, the Condominium invested little resources in southern governance and education, instead relying on inexpensive rule through a limited number of administrators. As a result of this, the Condominium subsidized the missions to run schools in their place. The CMS became very reliant on these subsidies. While this policy enabled the mission to open up both village and primary schools in relation to its stations, it also gave the Condominium a great deal of power over the CMS, allowing it to dictate where the mission would expand to.<sup>55</sup>

By the late 1930s, the Condominium became increasingly concerned that the mission schools in the south needed staff with better educational qualifications. Missionaries with educational background were given extended grants, and this new group of teachers were also expected to be fluent in the local vernacular language in their areas of engagement. The new educational policy was expressed in the creation of a series of intermediate, and later secondary schools, serving boys from different tribes, away from their tribal environments.<sup>56</sup> This development was a major step towards the eradication of the Government's Southern Policy and its insistence of rule through non-interference in tribal matters and division through tribal lines. Before 1937, the missionary-run primary schools in the south had been strictly confined within a tribal framework. Now, the most promising students of each primary school in the CMS' 11 stations were sent to elite schools in Loka, where they were further drafted for work as teachers, clerks, supervisors or heirs to chiefdoms.<sup>57</sup> In 1940 the first training programs for indigenous ministry were opened, and the year after the two first Sudanese were ordained.<sup>58</sup>

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<sup>54</sup> de Saram 1992, p. 129

<sup>55</sup> Zink 2018 "An Exilic Church", p. 279

<sup>56</sup> de Saram 1992, p. 130-31

<sup>57</sup> de Saram 1992, p. 131

<sup>58</sup> Wheeler 2015, p. 247



With this, the church had taken its first steps towards independence from the aspirations of the British Government, and into becoming an integral religious institution in the Sudan.

### *Emergence of Sudanese nationalism*

During the 1920s, the imposition of Indirect Rule had all but isolated the class of politically active educated northerners. In 1924 the government had been put to its biggest test yet when the White Flag League under Ali Abd al-Latif revolted against the Condominium under the slogan of “Unity in the Nile Valley”. While this revolt was quashed by the British military, this, together with the assassination of General Sir Lee Stack by an Egyptian nationalist in November the same year, prompted Britain to forcibly remove the Egyptian military from Sudan under threat from British machine guns.<sup>59</sup>

For the next decade, Sudan’s relationship with Egypt remained an open question. The events of 1924 and the Nile Waters Agreement of 1929, which had awarded Egypt rights many people felt were contrary to Sudan’s interest, had caused great disillusionment for the educated class in the north, who had seen Egypt as a potential ally for the nationalist cause of “Sudan for the Sudanese”. In 1936 a new treaty of alliance was struck between Britain and Egypt, which again made Egyptian troops available for the Governor-General, and opened for unlimited immigration from Egypt to the Sudan. This deal was received badly by both the British and the Sudanese. British officials in Khartoum were worried that renewed Egyptian influence would lead to more uprisings against the government, and the class of educated northerners saw Egypt’s involvement with the British Government as a betrayal and a statement of future Egyptian sovereignty over the Sudan. For the educated northerners, this caused new determination; the only way forward for the cause of Sudanese nationalism was now self-reliance.<sup>60</sup>

A turning point in the government’s relation to the Sudanese people came with the appointment of Stewart Symes as Governor General in 1934. Symes arrived with a plan of full reform of the administration, by promoting education and encouraging collaboration with

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<sup>59</sup> Collins 2008, p. 40-1

<sup>60</sup> Holt and Daly 2011, p. 97-8

the class of educated Sudanese rather than tribal authorities.<sup>61</sup> Supporters of Indirect Rule had argued that the farmers and nomads of Sudan did not need a literary education to carry out their tasks in the administration, but by 1934 a significant portion of the British officials in Khartoum felt that the Sudanese could no longer be denied higher education. This group of officials found common ground with Symes, who allowed for the educational reforms to proceed.<sup>62</sup>

Through the *Local Government Ordinances* act of 1937, the administration broke with its earlier dogmatic approach to Indirect Rule, by reorganizing the management of public affairs both in municipalities and in rural areas. This meant downgrading the positions of the traditional tribal leadership with an intention of expanding the bureaucracy with a class of educated Sudanese. This class, however, had further ambitions. In 1938, as a result of far-reaching protests at the Gordon Memorial College, the Graduate's General Congress was established with the objective of representing and promoting the interests of the educated Sudanese.

It soon became clear that the British had underestimated the Congress's willingness to engage in politics. The British had been relying on co-operation and obedience in return for its support of the Congress, hoping that it would act as a bulwark against Egyptian influence.<sup>63</sup> It was therefore a shock for the Government when, in 1942, the Congress issued a memorandum calling for the right of self-determination directly after the end of the war, and in addition the right of the Sudanese to determine their relationship with Egypt by themselves. The British response was harsh; by issuing the memorandum, the Congress had, as the British viewed it, forfeited the confidence of the Government. The Congress was instructed in no uncertain terms to confine itself to matters of internal and domestic affairs.<sup>64</sup>

The falling-out with the Congress had once and for all shown the British Government that the idea of Sudanese nationalism was to be taken seriously. The creation of the new "Advisory

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<sup>61</sup> Holt and Daly 2011, p. 99

<sup>62</sup> Collins 2008, p. 47

<sup>63</sup> Collins 2008, p. 49-50

<sup>64</sup> Holt and Daly 2011, p. 100-101

Council for Northern Sudan” in 1943 was an answer to the popular demand for broad representation in governance, but the Council was mostly symbolic. The Council consisted of 28 members from different provincial councils, but its powers were limited to the purely advisory.<sup>65</sup> Many educated Sudanese viewed the Council as a “debating society”, and as a conspiracy by the government, intended to divide the country.<sup>66</sup>

At the same time, politics in the Sudan became increasingly polarized. In 1943 *Ashigga* (the Brothers) was established by Ismail al-Azhari, who had been president of the Graduates’ General Congress and the main proponent of the memorandum to the British Government, as the first *de facto* political party in the Sudan. *Ashigga* was supported by the Sufi order *Khatmiyya*, and the party favoured a union with Egypt as a mode of emancipation from the British Government. *Ashigga* was also in opposition to the grass-roots support of the Mahdist movement and their leader ‘Abd al-Rahman al-Mahdi, who they feared would install a Mahdist monarchy in the Sudan with British support. Union with Egypt was in *Ashigga*’s view the only way of preventing the revival of the Mahdist state. As a response, moderate supporters of al-Rahman established the *Umma* in 1945, favoring complete independence of the country.<sup>67</sup> The rivalry between the two factions was intense, and along sectarian lines – divided between the Sufi order *Khatmiyya*, and the mahdist *Ansar*. While *Umma* was calling for independence for the Sudan, the party was also willing to co-operate with Britain to achieve its goals. *Ashigga*, for their part, viewed *Umma*’s willingness to work with the government as proof that the organization was nothing more than tools of British imperialism.<sup>68</sup>

At the end of the Second World War, Sudan’s internal politics was in disarray. For the British Government, co-operation with *Umma* seemed inevitable. Even though they severely distrusted al-Rahman and his ambitions as well as the support of Mahdism, the Government’s relation to *Umma* seemed to be the only outcome. The British attempt at a non-sectarian political leadership had failed, and with *Ashigga* favoring Egyptian union as well as the Muslim Brotherhood seeking to organize a Sudanese branch, co-operation with *Umma*

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<sup>65</sup> Following the custom of a *majlis al-shura*, the advisory Shura council.

<sup>66</sup> Collins 2008, p. 51-2

<sup>67</sup> Holt and Daly 2011, p.101

<sup>68</sup> Collins 2008, p. 53

seemed to be the only way to quell what the British viewed as an “Egyptian invasion”. At the same time, the political and religious divide between Umma and Ashigga, as well as between the Khatmiyya and the Ansar, grew deeper. They solidified themselves as the main factions in the political landscape, by incorporating smaller Sufi orders under their block, in a process that brought about internal splits in the orders.<sup>69</sup>

With the creation of the Legislative Assembly in 1949, the British Government attempted to create a body responsible for initiating and proposing legislation. Ashigga and the pro-unity parties however viewed this as a British-inspired anti-Egyptian ploy and boycotted the elections. This caused an overwhelming election victory for the well-organized Umma.<sup>70</sup> Umma worked hard to achieve its goal of self-government for Sudan, but from 1950 Egypt became a stronger factor in Sudan’s increasingly sectarian politics. In November, King Faruq announced that Egypt would withdraw both from the Anglo-Egyptian Condominium Agreement of 1899, as well as the treaty of 1936. Umma, sensing a shift in Egypt’s ambitions, moved to demand self-determination, winning a narrow victory in the Assembly. Egypt responded by declaring a unified Egypt and Sudan under one king, unveiling a constitution for the Sudan, an act that was rejected by all parties except from the Ashigga.

In 1952 the Assembly approved a Self-Government Statute which would create a Sudanese Government including a council of Sudanese ministers, as well as representatives from electoral colleges in the provinces. The Governor-General’s powers were restricted to a right of veto on external affairs, public services, and the south. However, on July 23<sup>rd</sup> the situation changed, when King Faruq was ousted by a group of revolutionary Egyptian officers, under the command of General Muhammad Neguib.<sup>71</sup>

### *The rush towards independence*

After Naguib and his Free Officers overthrew King Faruq, negotiations concerning the “Sudanese question” quickly resumed. In January 1953 the revolutionary Egyptian

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<sup>69</sup> Warburg 2003, p. 128-9

<sup>70</sup> Warburg 2003, p. 129

<sup>71</sup> Collins 2008, p. 59

government and the Sudanese political parties concluded the “Political Parties Agreement”, which recognized the Sudanese people’s right of self-determination, with a transitional period of three years. This agreement also gave the Sudanese people a choice of complete independence from Egypt, or a union. This agreement took the British officials in Sudan by surprise, but even though they disagreed with the agreement’s short transitional period, they also recognized the political implications of rejecting the deal. After all, Egypt had abandoned their position of unity in the Nile valley and opened for Sudanese self-determination, and the British sensed that they had no alternative but to stop resisting the proposals, even though they did not agree that it was in the best interests of the Sudanese. When it came to ratification Britain, however unwillingly, raised no objection, and gave in to the Egyptian position. On February 12<sup>th</sup>, 1953, a new Anglo-Egyptian agreement was signed, and Sudan was on course for self-government within three years.<sup>72</sup>

The following parliamentary elections in November were another shock for the British administration. Britain seemingly had failed to grasp the extent of the Sudanese people’s discontent with its administration, and when the final results came in, the Ashigga-derived *National Unionist Party* (NUP), led by Ismail al-Azhari and backed by the Khatmiyya, swept the elections, winning a clear majority. Britain saw this as a sign of a Sudanese endorsement towards unity with Egypt, but this was not the main reason for NUPs landslide victory – a majority of the voters simply wanted to show their distrust towards the British stewardship, as well as to prevent Mahdist influence over the country.

While Umma had failed to secure an alliance with other pro-independence forces, they also suffered a political fallout for its former willingness to co-operate with Britain.<sup>73</sup> The sectarian divide in Sudanese politics also played its part in preventing a Sudanese-Egyptian union. When al-Azhari, the newly appointed prime minister, invited General Neguib to attend the ceremonial opening of parliament on January 1<sup>st</sup>, 1954, this action was met by over 40 000 *Ansar* protesters, resulting in riots that caused several casualties and a postponement of the ceremonial opening. It became clear for the NUP that an Egyptian union would not be unequivocally accepted. With General Naguib’s removal from power in November and his

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<sup>72</sup> Deng 1994 p. 64-5

<sup>73</sup> Collins 2008, p. 62-4

successor Colonel Nasser's crackdown on communism and the Muslim Brotherhood, both movements attracting young Sudanese, the disaffection with Egyptian unity reached a breaking point. By 1955 any support for unity in the Nile Valley was effectively gone; Sudan had made the choice of independence.<sup>74</sup>

With the Egyptian question at least momentarily resolved, al-Azhari entered the final stages of the rush towards independence. In August 1955, parliament passed a resolution demanding the withdrawal of all British and Egyptian forces from the Sudan, and by November they had left. In an attempt to calm the sectarian differences in the country the leaders of the Khatmiyya and Ansar met to settle their differences and achieve a coalition government, which was accepted by al-Azhari. In December both the House of Representatives and the Senate unanimously voted to declare Sudan independent, and on January 1<sup>st</sup>, 1956, the British and Egyptian flags were lowered in Khartoum. Independent Sudan was born.<sup>75</sup>

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<sup>74</sup> Holt and Daly 2011, p. 111-12

<sup>75</sup> Collins 2008, p. 68

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## CHAPTER 3

### **The Episcopal Church from Condominium to independence 1945-1956**

#### *South Sudan on the eve of independence*

With the rising force of Sudanese nationalism during the 1940s, the British administrators realized that the isolationism and tribal structuring of the 1930 Southern Policy had left the south further and further behind with respect to educating a politically active class for positions in the administration. Under pressure from both British officials and Sudanese politicians in the north, Britain had to make a choice of what to do with the southern provinces. A memorandum issued in 1942 by the Graduates' General Congress in the north called for a repeal of the Closed Districts Ordinance, and with this a repeal of restrictions on trade and movement of Sudanese inside the country. In a proposition from the Governor-General to the High Commissioner in Cairo, he outlined three different options concerning the future of the south: Either integration of the south into the north, integration into east Africa, or integration of parts of the south into the north, and other parts to east Africa. Fearing the reaction both from the north and Egypt, Britain settled on the only option they felt would be acceptable: Annexation of the whole south into the north.<sup>76</sup>

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<sup>76</sup> Deng 1994, p. 49

By 1945 the Southern Policy of 1930 was revised. The new revision reflected Britain's uncertainty towards the future of the south. On one hand, the policy lifted some of the strict isolationism of the 1930s, by stating that Britain's obvious duty was to "*push ahead as fast as we can*" with the economic and educational development of the south. Concerned with the widening educational gap between southerners and northerners, the policy further stated that the aim was to equip southerners to stand up for themselves in the future, "*whether their lot can be eventually cast with the Northern Sudan or with East Africa (or partly with each)*".<sup>77</sup> A year later the policy was revised again, in accordance with Britain's decision to integrate the southern provinces into the north. The Civil Secretary James Robertson issued a memorandum reversing Britain's previous intentions in the south. Now, after acknowledging that the people of the southern Sudan are "*distinctively African and Negroid*" the text further clarified that geography and economics combine to render the south "*inextricably bound for future development to the Middle Eastern and Arabized Northern Sudan*", and that the role of Britain further was to ensure that southerners by educational and economic development were prepared the future, as "*socially and economically the equals of their partners of the Northern Sudan*".<sup>78</sup>

Robertson's memorandum was widely distributed in the Sudan, but after learning about the intentions of including the south in the proposed Legislative Assembly, many British officials argued that the south had not been consulted about the new policy, demanding some safeguards against the northern politicians in a future Assembly to in order to secure the political and social interests of the south. In an effort to include southern opinions in the decision-making, the two-day Juba Conference was held in June 1947. The conference included seventeen southerners and three northern representatives, and among the issues discussed were southern participation in the proposed legislative assembly and the creations of safeguards for the south. The conference became a peculiar affair. During the first day the southern representatives almost unanimously argued that the south was not yet ready to participate in a united legislative assembly, calling for a slow and cautious advance of people who were not yet "grown up".<sup>79</sup> During the second day however, most of the southern

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<sup>77</sup> Deng 1994, p. 47

<sup>78</sup> Robertson memorandum 1946, from Deng 1994, p. 47

<sup>79</sup> Holt and Daly 2011, p. 104



delegates had suddenly changed their minds. According to the memorandum written by B.V. Marwood, Governor of Equatoria, one of the southern delegates, Clement Mboro, stated that:

Since the Conference of the day before he had fundamentally changed his mind and now considered that the best way in which the Southerners could protect themselves would be to go to Khartoum now to legislate together with the Northerners.<sup>80</sup>

This reversal of the southern delegates stance has often been attributed to inexperience, but according to Deng (1994) some southern politicians and intellectuals have since alleged that the delegates were threatened, blackmailed and bribed by their northern counterparts during the night before the second day of the conference. This allegation was further substantiated by a testimony provided by one of the delegates before the Commission of Enquiry following the Torit uprising of 1955.<sup>81</sup> The delegate stated that during that night:

...Arab politicians made individual approaches to Southern members using all available means and arguments – bribery not excluded – to explain to them that the unity intended was the unity of administration other than unity in the constitutional sense.<sup>82</sup>

When the Juba Conference was concluded on June 13<sup>th</sup>, the recommendation from the delegates was clear: The Legislative Assembly should be representative of the whole of Sudan including the south, provided that “*safeguards be introduced which will enable the healthy and steady development of the Southern peoples*”.<sup>83</sup> This advice was subsequently accepted by Britain, completing the reversal of the southern policy of 1930 and removing the social and economic barriers between the north and the south. When the Legislative Assembly began its work in 1948, 13 southerners were included among the its 75 members.<sup>84</sup>

While the Juba Conference is often seen as having settled the question of Sudanese unity, the conference in itself did not discuss a separate administrative future for the south. The southern delegates felt that they were presented with an ultimatum of participation in the Assembly or nothing; the delegate James Tembura for example stated that the northerner Judge Shingeiti had said that “*if they did not do so they would have no say in the future Government of the*

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<sup>80</sup> Marwood 1947 – Memorandum from the Juba Conference. WEB: 07.03.19  
<http://www.gurtong.net/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=OBZ%2B7v1SXis%3D&tabid=124>

<sup>81</sup> Deng 1994, p. 52

<sup>82</sup> Commission of Enquiry, 1955, from Deng 1994, p. 53-4

<sup>83</sup> Deng 1994, p. 53

<sup>84</sup> Holt and Daly 2011, p. 105

*Sudan*”, as an explanation for his changed position on the issue.<sup>85</sup> Furthermore, the southerners did not have any mandate from their people – Robertson, the Civil Secretary and chair of the conference, later stated that “*The only decision resulting from the conference was taken by myself*”.<sup>86</sup>

After the Anglo-Egyptian agreement of 1953, the following parliamentary elections put the south on the receiving end of electioneering efforts from NUP with assistance from representatives of the Egyptian government. Al-Azhari and NUP ran on a platform of Sudanization of the government, and promised southerners full representation at all levels of the civil service, underlining in its election manifesto that “*priority always should be given to southerners in the south*” and that the employment of southerners should be greatly fostered in the north, “*especially in the higher ranks of the central Government Service*”.<sup>87</sup> Even though NUP won only 6 of 22 southern seats in the House of Representatives, it was still enough to win the election. Al-Azhari’s promises soon turned out to be a deceit – after appointing its “Sudanization Commission” tasked with replacing 800 British administration posts with Sudanese, only four positions were given to southerners. This was justified with the excuse that the southerners lacked education and experience.<sup>88</sup>

### *The Torit mutiny*

In reaction to the absence of southerners in administrative positions, members of the southern leadership – including members from NUP and the Liberal Party, as well as chiefs and representatives from the diaspora in Khartoum – convened in Juba in 1954. The purpose was to discuss the political future of the Sudan and the future of the south inside Sudan. The conference resolved that the south should vote for independence from Egypt, but only on condition of the creation of a federal system for the entire Sudan, with an autonomous state in the south.<sup>89</sup> Southerners feared that the Sudanization program was the beginning of a northern colonizing effort, and the rapid influx of northern officials in government positions in the

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<sup>85</sup> Marwood 1947 – Memorandum from the Juba Conference. WEB: 07.03.19  
<http://www.gurtong.net/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=OBZ%2B7v1SXis%3D&tabid=124>

<sup>86</sup> Johnson 2003 “The Root Causes of Sudan’s Civil Wars”, p. 25

<sup>87</sup> Deng 1994, p. 69

<sup>88</sup> Warburg 2003, p. 139

<sup>89</sup> Johnson 2003, p. 27

south did little to calm the dismay felt by the people. The northerners knew almost nothing of the culture, language and ethnicity of the southern Sudanese they were supposed to govern, and protests in the south soon turned violent.

In July 1955 the southern politician Elia Kuze was arrested in the town of Yambio after having visited a group of protesting workers who had been laid off at an industrial complex by a new management consisting of northerners. When workers demonstrated in support for Kuze, northern administrators ordered the police and military to shoot them, leaving eight people dead.<sup>90</sup> The clearest sign that the Sudan was moving towards a crisis of north-south relations appeared from August 18<sup>th</sup>, 1955, when the southern soldiers of the Equatoria Corps mutinied in the town of Torit. The garrison had been scheduled to leave for Khartoum, but rumors of northern crackdowns and reprisals made the troops fear they would be enslaved or massacred on arrival. The mutiny soon spread to all major towns in Equatoria, leading to killings of northern officials and civilians, and evacuations leaving towns in the hands of the southern police.<sup>91</sup> On August 19 the mutineers reached out to British troops in Kenya for help, but the reply stated that they could expect no help from Britain, who considered this a serious crime.

During the next week the mutineers demanded the evacuation of all northern troops from Juba, and when negotiations between the southern troops and al-Azhari failed, Britain finally agreed to airlift some eight thousand northern troops to the south to quash the rebellion.<sup>92</sup> On August 27<sup>th</sup> the mutineers laid down their arms. At least 336 people had been killed, 261 of them northerners. Most of the mutineers fled to the bush. Around 300 people were captured, hurriedly trialed and executed, but many fled over the mountainous border to Uganda, where they continued their insurgency.<sup>93</sup>

The Torit mutiny left a lasting stain on Sudanese history. Firstly, the episode had convinced Britain of the futility of its role in the country – with vague responsibilities and no power over

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<sup>90</sup> Poggo 2009 "The First Sudanese Civil War", p. 37

<sup>91</sup> Collins 2008, p. 66-7

<sup>92</sup> Poggo 2009, p. 42-44

<sup>93</sup> Poggo 2009, p. 45

events – and as result of this they encouraged al-Azharis efforts to achieve independence, even with several issues still unresolved.<sup>94</sup> Secondly, the disturbances helped the former province al-Azhari to hasten the process without any connection to Egypt, as many southerners had seen an Egyptian unity as a potential safeguard to northern dominance.<sup>95</sup> Thirdly, as a culmination of years of frustration in the south, the conflict had now reached a violent peak. The mutineers in exile on the Ugandan border continued their struggle, and soon turned into organized guerilla groups, most notably the *Anyanya*. Without clear political action to address the southern issues, the country had, even before the Sudanese flag was raised in Khartoum on January 1<sup>st</sup>, 1956, entered the first phase of a long and destructive civil war.

### ***The Episcopal Church in Sudan from Condominium to independence***

From 1920, the church had been part of the Anglican Diocese of Egypt, under the leadership of Bishop Gwynne. The growth of the church in the south during the 1930s had made it clear that the time would come for Sudan to be its own diocese to better administrate the vast areas of the country. For one part, the ever-changing intricacies of the south – with differences in language, ethnicity and tribal structures throughout the provinces – for many meant that the church would be better off administered from within. The revival of 1938 had also shown signs of division and conflict within the church, signaling the need for a stable church structure – in what de Saram describes as “*harvesting the fruits of revival*”.<sup>96</sup>

### ***Towards a vernacular church***

While the British Southern Policy from 1930 brought about a sense of protection for the Mission Stations in the south, the extended grants to missionaries with an educational background meant that by the mid-1930s, the Mission Stations had far more teachers than priests and clergy. To combat this, the CMS by the latter part of the decade began to focus more directly on indigenous leadership, ordaining its first Sudanese clergy, Anderia Apaya and Daniel Deng Atong in 1941. Both Apaya and Atong were former houseboys of missionaries, raised within the Church; the latter would be ordained the first Sudanese bishop

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<sup>94</sup> Johnson 2003, p. 29

<sup>95</sup> Collins 2008, p. 67

<sup>96</sup> de Saram 1992, p. 142

in 1955.<sup>97</sup> In 1945 the first training programs for indigenous ministry, the South Sudan Divinity School, were founded in Yei, ordaining six students as deacons by 1947.<sup>98</sup>

The British policy of separation and reliance on tribalism also meant that the different regions allocated to the CMS developed at different paths. One of the problems facing the prospect of large-scale ordaining of potential Sudanese recruits was literacy as a requirement for baptism. With English as the language of the scriptures, this would in effect reserve ordainment for the very best students of the village schools who managed to be sent to Loka for further training. From the beginning of its operations in the south the CMS had emphasized vernacular language as key in its missionary strategies, with Archibald Shaw starting the work of translating scriptures into the language of the Dinka already from his arrival in the south in 1905. By 1954 the Scriptures had been translated to most of the most common vernacular languages in the south: The first iteration of the Zande New Testament was finished in 1938, the Dinka Bor New Testament in 1940, the Moru in 1951 and the Bari in 1954.<sup>99</sup>

While the missionaries educational “feeder-system” of the 1930s – from village schools to the elite institutions in Loka – provided the church with a stable influx of new converts, this also alienated the converts from their local communities. Conversion required a cultural transformation, with the introduction of European dress, a requirement of literacy and participation in the structures of education and in the missionaries’ community.<sup>100</sup> Even though the Mission Stations were closely integrated in the local communities of the south, conversions were relatively few and far between: From the indigenous point of view, conversion meant adopting a European way of life, which in turn often meant that the southerners regarded that God in the teachings was the God of the missionaries, and not for them.<sup>101</sup>

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<sup>97</sup> Wheeler 1999, p. 100 «Life in the Village of God», in: *But God is Not Defeated*.

<sup>98</sup> de Saram 1992, p. 148

<sup>99</sup> Wheeler 2015, p. 248

<sup>100</sup> Wheeler 2002 “Richard Jones and the Sudan Revival of 1938”, p. 169

<sup>101</sup> Wheeler 2002, p. 169

### *The Sudan revival of 1938*

In 1938, morale was reportedly low in many of the Mission Stations in the south. The resources of the stations were stretched and barely staffed, and many missionaries had left because of sickness and the difficult living conditions in the south. The missionaries also faced criticism over the state of education in the south, causing the British administration to require all new missionary staff to be educationally trained before arriving in the Sudan. One of these new recruits was an English missionary named Richard Jones, who had worked at several educational institutions in Britain, including the Bible College of Swansea. This college was renowned for having a strong focus on revivalism, strongly influenced by the 1904-1905 Welsh Revival.<sup>102</sup> The theological teachings of the college revolved around personal prayer, with messages and instruction that was considered delivered by divine intervention.<sup>103</sup> It was from this background, with the message of revival somewhat at odds with the more moderate values of the CMS, that Richard Jones arrived in the Sudan in 1938.

Upon his arrival Jones was made solely responsible for the Mission Station in Yambio, which had been without any CMS missionaries for some time. Jones was not impressed with the state of the area, reportedly calling it “*a sink of iniquity and a haunt of drunkards and adulterers*”, and that the church was “*bare of human life*” at Sunday service.<sup>104</sup> Jones subsequently suspended the regular services in the church, replacing them with a preaching mission focused on the main principles of the Welsh Revival and the concurrent East African Revival, which had begun in Rwanda in 1929. Emphasis in this movement was on open confession and cleansing from sin.<sup>105</sup> Jones considered himself an “instrument” of God tasked with spreading what he called the “Vision”. His services in Yambio were vigorous affairs, often lasting from early evening to late night, and he attracted a devout following. In June 1938 he consecrated 15 church teachers in Yambio, who became loyal followers, refusing to accept payment for their services.<sup>106</sup>

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<sup>102</sup> The Welsh revival reportedly converted about 150.000 people, and the movement acted as a catalyst for revival movements all over the world – among them the East African Revival.

<sup>103</sup> Wheeler 2002, p. 172-3

<sup>104</sup> Wheeler 2002, p. 174

<sup>105</sup> Wheeler 2002, p. 175

<sup>106</sup> Wheeler 2002, p. 176-178

On June 10<sup>th</sup>, 1938, Jones was invited to Loka to talk at the school about his experiences developing the church in Yambio. Instead he waged a full-scale attack against the teachers and missionaries in the area, accusing them of sin and adultery.<sup>107</sup> Jones condemned both British and Sudanese members of the church, and made several senior teachers, among them future bishop Daniel Deng Atong repent. The accusations also forced a protest from some of the British missionaries, namely Charles and Leonard Sharland. As a result, Jones abruptly walked out of the meeting on grounds that he felt that the “work of the Holy Spirit” was being frustrated in Loka.<sup>108</sup> When news of these events reached the Condominium government, the response was a swift condemnation of Jones’ actions. J.M. Humphrey, the Civil Secretary in Khartoum, called for Jones to be removed from his position in the Sudan, noting in a letter to Bishop Gwynne that the revivalist preachers were “*men of an unbalanced and undisciplined type unsuitable for recruitment to the Sudan mission field*”.<sup>109</sup> Before July was over, Jones had left.

Although he only spent three months in the Sudan, Jones had created a revivalist movement that caused friction both inside the Missionary societies and between the missionaries and the Condominium. Jones’ message had led to a strong feeling of disappointment and betrayal with the missionaries. His followers rejected the concept of wealth and possessions, refusing to accept a salary for their work as school teachers and accusing the former missionaries to be more interested in money than doing God’s work.<sup>110</sup> The movement deeply disturbed the British Government. To them, Jones’ followers represented a challenge, fearing the disruptive powers of an indigenous religious movement critical of authority. One of the schoolboys who had heard Jones’ speech at Loka, was imprisoned for six months for preaching that it was “*more important to obey God than the chiefs*”.<sup>111</sup> To alleviate the tensions growing inside the church, one of the main figures of the East African Revival, Joe Church, was invited in October 1938 to reconcile the conflicting parties. This strategy backfired when Mr. Church observed that the same thing was happening in Rwanda, and that “*the white men are the hinderers also there in Rwanda, but they must bend down*”.<sup>112</sup>

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<sup>107</sup> de Saram 1992, p. 138

<sup>108</sup> de Saram 1992, p. 139

<sup>109</sup> Wheeler 2002, p. 178

<sup>110</sup> Wheeler 2002, p. 180

<sup>111</sup> Wheeler 2002, p. 180

<sup>112</sup> Report from Jon Majak, from Wheeler 2002, p. 183-4

The revival in Yambio did not last, and Jones' followers gradually left the movement in the aftermath of his departure. At the same time, a similar revival movement began in Akot, among the Agar Dinka,<sup>113</sup> which also achieved similar growth in numbers, attracting sometimes as much as thousands of Dinka for open-air Sunday services.<sup>114</sup> While this movement survived for longer than Jones' congregation in Yambio, Akot was a very isolated place with few connections with surrounding areas, and the revivalist movement would eventually be swept away by the civil war from 1955 that drove the population into exile or in hiding.<sup>115</sup> The biggest impact of Jones' teaching was with the Moru people.<sup>116</sup> Moru schoolkids at Loka brought their new faith back to their home area, where Jones' revivalist message remained part of local life.<sup>117</sup>

While little of the large revivalist movements of the 1930s has survived, Jones' legacy to the southern ECS members was that the Europeans did not necessarily have to be a mediator, that the Sudanese by themselves could take control of their religion – that the God in the teachings was not the God of the missionaries, but also for them.

### *The south preparing for independence*

In 1939 Morris Gelsthorpe was appointed assistant bishop over Egypt and the Sudan, after his predecessor Guy Bullen had been killed in a plane crash en route from Khartoum to Juba.<sup>118</sup> Gelsthorpe insisted on bringing more of the church government into the hands of the Sudanese. In a charge to the Southern Archdeaconry Council in 1942 he declared that the church was now “*reaching the stage when the Church is beginning to do the main part of preaching in this its own country, and it must also be self-governing and self-financing*”.

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<sup>113</sup> Agar Dinka is one of the main dialects of the Dinka nilotic language, the others being Padang, Rek, Awiel, Twic Mayardit, Hol, Nyarweng, Twi and Bor.

<sup>114</sup> de Saram 1992, p. 140-1

<sup>115</sup> Wheeler 2002, p. 184

<sup>116</sup> The Mora is an ethnic group in the province of Mundri, western Equatoria.

<sup>117</sup> Enosa 1999 “Revival in the Episcopal Church of the Sudan” in *But God is Not Defeated* p. 132

<sup>118</sup> Wheeler 1999 “Bishop Guy Bullen 1896-1937” in *But God is Not Defeated* p. 87



Furthermore, local Church Councils matters were “*increasingly in the hands of the African Church*”.<sup>119</sup>

On October 1<sup>st</sup>, 1945, the independent diocese of the Sudan was born, with Gelsthorpe consecrated as its first bishop. In Gelsthorpe’s closing words at his enthronement as bishop he envisioned the coming independence, saying that “*Gradually British institutions will become Sudanized until few traces of them remain. But one institution will go on. Slowly it will come under the care of African leaders, African clergy, African laymen. It is the Church of Christ*”.<sup>120</sup> After the Juba Conference in 1947 and the creation of the Legislative Assembly, it had been decided that the south was bound for a future together with the north. While it until this point had been a strong possibility of the south seceding from the north, this development meant that the Episcopal Church in Sudan (ECS) would have to prepare for a future in a united Sudan.

In a letter from Civil Secretary J.W. Robertson to Bishop Gelsthorpe, dated March 1948, Robertson answered a few lingering questions regarding the path forward, and the role of the church in the future of the country. In the letter Robertson defended the revised Southern Policy of 1946, suggesting that while he viewed British influence as beneficial to the whole country, he was also doubtful that they would be able to maintain influence over the northern Sudanese for a long period of time. Robertson further suggested that co-operation with the northern Sudanese would be better for the South. This policy would according to Robertson not necessarily be problematic, as he did not believe “*the northern official or trader will do any harm to the South as long as we are administering the South*”. On the subject of Governmental support of the missions, Robertson was more doubtful:

Regarding the missions, I do not see how the Government can protect them and bolster them up. Christianity must stand on its own merits (surely they are adequate) and beat Islam without the Government’s aid. I think a more vital and living church will emerge, if it has to fight and not rest assured on Government support.<sup>121</sup>

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<sup>119</sup> de Saram 1992, p. 143

<sup>120</sup> Wheeler 1999 “Morris Gelsthorpe 1892-1968” in *But God is Not Defeated* p. 89

<sup>121</sup> Letter from Civil Secretary J.W. Robertson to Bishop Gelsthorpe, March 1948, SAD 809/1/6

Bishop Gelsthorpe realized early on that the new Diocese would require him to spend a considerable amount of time in the north. He thus sought to delegate the responsibility for church and mission in the south, and on April 19<sup>th</sup>, 1948, Oliver Allison was consecrated as Assistant Bishop in the Sudan.<sup>122</sup> Allison had first been stationed in Juba in 1938, in the Bari parish.<sup>123</sup> Here he was responsible for the primary education and church services for the English-speaking congregation, and he also learned the language of the Bari. In 1953 he succeeded Morris Gelsthorpe as Bishop in the Sudan.<sup>124</sup> As with Gelsthorpe's enthronement, the matter of who was to be Assistant Bishop was under serious consideration. The choice ultimately fell on Daniel Deng Atong, who in 1955 became the first Sudanese Bishop, tasked with the oversight over the church in the south with assistance from several African clergy. The Condominium Government was, according to de Saram, eager to frame Deng's enthronement as an important step towards "Sudanization of the Church". He further recalls a conversation with a northern District Commissioner, saying in relation to a Sudanese priest in his area, that the church "*has led the way in Sudanization here*".<sup>125</sup>

From the early 1950s much effort was made to bolster the educational and economic development in south towards the inevitable independence. Acting upon a report to the Legislative Assembly from the first Educational Minister Abd al-Rahman Ali Taha, the Assembly in 1951 outlined a five-year plan consisting of expansion and unification of the educational system in the north and the south. This plan required that all missionaries and teachers in the south should learn and teach in Arabic.<sup>126</sup> While this policy also put the missionary schools under supervision from the ministry, the policy also increased the subsidies to the missionary schools.

On the eve of independence, the situation in the south had deteriorated again. Following the Torit mutiny the south was cast into a state of emergency, forcing the missionary schools to temporarily close. Even before the new government had convened in Khartoum, the looming tensions in the south presented a problem that would affect the country significantly.

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<sup>122</sup> de Saram 1992, p. 144

<sup>123</sup> The Bari is an ethnic group in the south and parts of Uganda, mainly situated in the Nile Valley around Juba.

<sup>124</sup> Tikiba 1999 "Bishop Oliver Allison 1908-1989" in *But God is Not Defeated* p. 91-2

<sup>125</sup> de Saram 1992, p. 151

<sup>126</sup> Breidlid et. al 2010 "A Concise History of South Sudan" p. 173

### *The church in the north*

The development of the church in the north is distinctly different from the wide-reaching missionary endeavors in the south. As the Condominium first banned and later tightly restricted proselytism, the church in the north was not concerned with Muslim conversion the same way its southern counterpart was to the indigenous tribes. As the government was increasingly focused on providing social services in the north, the missionaries were not the major developers of schools and hospitals.<sup>127</sup> The Condominium Government nevertheless took steps in securing that the British officers serving in the north would be able to practice their faith. The first church in the north, the All Saints Cathedral in Khartoum, was finished in 1912, and during the 1930s churches were founded in places such as Wad Medani, El Obeid and Port Sudan, in addition to providing services such as the Sudan Bookshop in the capital.<sup>128</sup>

One of the most important services provided by the missionaries in the north was the organization of girls' education, opening the first Khartoum Girls School as early as 1902. By focusing on this, the missionaries found a part of the social structure that was not yet utilized by the government schools – the Sudanese public at the time voiced no demands for girls' education, and it was in large parts not widely accepted by the Muslim elite.<sup>129</sup> The first efforts were mainly focused on schooling for daughters of Egyptian Copts stationed in Sudan, but in the wake of the First World War the numbers of Sudanese Muslim girls attending the schools rose as a result of changing views of girls' education by Muslim men – many now saw some basic education in domestic skills as favorable to their daughters' marriageability.<sup>130</sup>

The missionary teachers had clear restrictions when it came to the teaching of religion. While it was accepted for them to teach on the subject of the Old Testament, the New Testament was by government orders optional for Muslim students. When some mission teachers went too

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<sup>127</sup> Sharkey 2002 "Christians Among Muslims", p. 57

<sup>128</sup> de Saram 1992, p. 153-4

<sup>129</sup> Sharkey 2002, p. 58

<sup>130</sup> Sharkey 2002, p. 60

far with evangelical tendencies, the pupils and their families revolted; incidents of classroom proselytism in 1926 led to mass demonstrations against the missionaries and calls for the creation of independent public schools for women to rival the missionaries'.<sup>131</sup> Even though the CMS missionaries originally had intended for their schools to be centers of evangelism, the missionary schools returned few converts. A lot of the reasons behind this has to do with the governmental restrictions placed upon the teachers, but also the social fabric of Sudanese life played its part. Most Sudanese Muslim females lacked the liberty to take radical choices for themselves, especially regarding something so fundamental as conversion. If a Muslim woman wanted to convert, she would have to secure the permission of her father, something that would seem like a hard obstacle to surmount – the few Muslims who converted to Christianity in CMS areas were almost exclusively male.<sup>132</sup> While the evangelical efforts of the missionary teachers in the north gave few results, the schools nevertheless were crucial in making girls' education more socially acceptable, providing a service where there was none, and paving the way for future advances in the field.

Until the 1940s, the church in the north were mostly based around service for ex-patriates, but a stream of southerners looking for work were the first instances of an emerging Sudanese northern church. By 1942 clubs were opened both in Khartoum and Omdurman for the southerners, and in 1949 a Unity Church was completed by the CMS and the American Mission, holding services both in Arabic and southern vernaculars.<sup>133</sup> While many of the new arrivals in the northern cities came from the south, the influx of working immigrants also included a significant number of people from the Nuba Mountains in Kordofan.<sup>134</sup> The United Sudan Mission<sup>135</sup> had started work among the population of the Nuba already in 1920, and even though the ECS was discouraged from missionary activities in the north it was in 1935 allowed to open schools with government help in the region. Shortly before, the government had reached a decision of what language to use in the schools of the Nuba Mountains, declaring Arabic, not English or vernacular languages as the lingua franca – breaking with the

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<sup>131</sup> Sharkey 2002, p. 61-2

<sup>132</sup> Sharkey 2002, p. 64

<sup>133</sup> de Saram 1992, p. 159

<sup>134</sup> The Nuba Mountains is a region in southern Kordofan.

<sup>135</sup> The Sudan United Mission was an evangelical Protestant Mission consisting of missionaries from Australia and New Zealand, who were allocated the mission «sphere» of the Nuba Mountains.

policies of the southern mission in order to extend trade and cultural relations with Kordofan and the north.<sup>136</sup>

The government's reasoning for promoting mission schools in predominantly non-Muslim areas was to protect the indigenous culture of the Nuba from Muslim influence, and at the same time the sons of already Muslim fathers attended government schools, not Mission ones. From 1930 the British Government had promoted the use of Romanized instead of standard Arabic in the mission schools, as some officials feared that allowing the Nuba to read standard Arabic would open them up to exposure from Arab culture<sup>137</sup>, and "*disintegrate their tribal life*".<sup>138</sup> By 1935 the support for Romanized Arabic ended with the appointment of Douglas Newbold as Governor of Kordofan, in favor of standardized Arabic. This, however, did not mean that the teaching of Romanized Arabic ended abruptly – many missionaries in the Nuba Mountains simply lacked the skills to teach standardized Arabic.<sup>139</sup>

The school system that came in place in the Nuba Mountains had many similarities with the ones in place in the south. From the 1940s a system of village schools covered the whole Nuba Mountains, and an intermediate school and a teacher training center provided the schools with new recruits. The main difference and the function of these schools was that it for the first time was set in place a system for providing the church with Sudanese Christian leaders who were proficient in Arabic, setting in place the groundwork for the building of a literate Arabic church, and thereby providing an example for the growing of the church in Muslim-dominated cities in the north.

#### *The church responding to Sudanese nationalism*

The involvement of the church in south during the first 40 years of the Condominium in many ways reflected Britain's undecidedness over what exactly to do with the area. While the

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<sup>136</sup> Sharkey 2002, p. 69

<sup>137</sup> Sharkey also refers to an observation from a French woman traveller, Odette Keun, who in her book «A Foreigner Looks at British Sudan» from 1930 describes the British policy in the area as an attempt to «save the Nuba from trousers and Islam» (Sharkey 2002, p. 70).

<sup>138</sup> Mathews 1930 "Memorandum of Educational Policy in the Nuba Pagan Area", cited from Sharkey 2002, p. 69

<sup>139</sup> Sharkey 2002, p.70

missionaries in the north were tightly regulated and forbidden from proselytizing, the missionaries in the south were given much more freedom, with the different Christian denominations divided into “spheres” of influence. There, they provided essential services such as education and healthcare, subsidized by the Condominium Government. Through the Southern Policy of 1930 the government had emphasized tribalism and reliance on indigenous customs as means of government in the south, but the promulgation of the *Local Government Ordinances* act of 1937 set in motion a chain of events that thrust the previously isolated class of educated northerners into the middle of Sudanese politics. With the rising notion of Sudanese nationalism, the pressure from the northern politicians started mounting on the Condominium to repeal the Closed Districts Ordinance from 1914 and allow free trade and movement of Sudanese in the south; the Condominium once and for all had to determine the future of the south.

It is important to emphasize that Britain up until 1945 did not administer the south for a future together with the north. Rather, they viewed the ethnographical differences as a reasoning for the south to be bound to a future as either independent or together with East Africa. Affected by pressure both from the north and Egypt, the Southern Policy of 1946 annexing the south to the north set in motion a race to bolster the economic and educational development of the south, before the arrival of what was widely viewed as an inevitable independence from Britain. For the church, this development had far-reaching consequences. After decades of growing a vernacular church in the southern territories, the unification of Sudan meant that the ECS was under pressure to establish a distinctly Sudanese, and not solely indigenous, church. This also meant that the churches in the south and the north – whose development had been following very different paths – would be bound together for a future as a single entity, which was accomplished with the creation of the independent Diocese of the Sudan in 1945.

Bishop Gelsthorpe’s speech at his enthronement in 1945, in which he envisaged the Sudanization of the British institutions and the Africanization of the church, in many ways encapsulates the ten years from the reversion of the Southern Policy to independence. The Condominium Government made efforts to bolster education and economy in the south, by continuing to focus on educationally qualified teachers in the missionary schools. The first efforts towards unification of the school system in the north and the south in 1951 also

increased the subsidies to the mission schools, as well as introducing a requirement that all teachers should be fluent in Arabic. On the other hand, the church also faced a battle to educate and appoint Sudanese clergy to carry on the work of the church in an independent country, an effort that eventually led to the appointment of Daniel Deng Atong as the first Sudanese Bishop in 1955.

The Africanization of the church was in part also an effort to preempt a problem that would come to surface in the first years of the independent Sudan, by showing that the church had become an integral part of Sudanese society, and not just a lingering branch of the Condominium. To do this, the church would have to distance itself from the British in the eyes of the northern politicians. For the British Government, this had already happened: J.W. Robertson instructed Bishop Gelsthorpe already in 1948 that, if the church should survive, it had to “*fight and not rest assured on government support*”.<sup>140</sup> Nevertheless, the shadow of British colonialism would follow the ECS for a long time.

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<sup>140</sup> Letter from Civil Secretary J.W. Robertson to Bishop Gelsthorpe, March 1948, SAD 809/1/6

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## CHAPTER 4

### **The Episcopal Church in independent Sudan 1956-1964**

#### *The parliamentary period*

When flag was raised for the new Sudanese Republic on January 1<sup>st</sup>, 1956, the government headed by Ismail al-Azhari was already under strong pressure. The fragile coalition that had led to the achievement of independence immediately began to fracture, and when Sayyid ‘Ali al-Mirghani and the Khatmiyya retracted its support for Azhari in June, 21 members of the coalition government defected from the NUP and formed the People’s Democratic Party (PDP). When the PDP further sided with Umma on a no-confidence vote, al-Azhari was ousted as Prime Minister, only seven months after independence. In his place, Abdullah Khalil, secretary-general of the Umma, was elected.<sup>141</sup>

Khalil’s tenure as Prime Minister was marred by continuous infighting and mistrust. Even though the coalition had tried to present itself as committed to national unity over sectarian loyalties, the divisions in government made substantial co-operation on policy issues difficult. The parties disagreed on the future system of government; while Umma favored a strong

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<sup>141</sup> Collins 2008, p. 69



government with a presidential position, the PDP feared a Mahdist power-grab.<sup>142</sup> One of the biggest challenges facing the government was the creation and promulgation of an acceptable permanent constitution for the new nation. Leading up to independence the country had been under the Temporary Constitution of 1956, which had allowed for independence. This was intended as a placeholder for a future bi-partisan effort, but when work started on the Permanent Constitution, the sectarian divide in government re-emerged.<sup>143</sup> Another factor that complicated the work of the Constitutional Committee, was the emergence of the Muslim Brotherhood, a group that was to have a significant impact on the future politics in Sudan.

The Muslim Brotherhood had as early as 1954 advocated for an Islamic constitution based on the Qur'an and the Sunna. They called for the establishment of an Islamic state under a Muslim head of state, with a parliamentary system based on Islamic law, and legislation rooted in the sharia. As a political group the Brotherhood was small in numbers in 1957, but they were prepared to work with any of the larger traditional Muslim parties if they would agree to an Islamic constitution. This struck a chord with Umma and the PDP. Early in 1957 the Committee declared that Islam was going to be the official state religion in the country, and sharia as *a* legislative source. In response to this, al-Mirghani and al-Rahman al-Mahdi jointly called for the Sudan to become an Islamic republic, with sharia as *the* main source of legislation.<sup>144</sup>

In the new constitution, the country was set to be fully Islamized inside a time period of five years. On the issue of religious minorities, the text prohibited discrimination of non-Muslims, stating that they would enjoy all rights granted under Muslim law.<sup>145</sup> This was not an acceptable solution for the south. Even before independence, most of the southern politicians had favored federalism as a way of keeping the south from being completely subordinated by the north, and by 1957 the newly-formed Federal Party held almost all of the parliamentary seats allocated to the southern districts. The northern politicians however dismissed the idea

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<sup>142</sup> Holt and Daly 2011, p. 116

<sup>143</sup> Warburg 2003, p. 145

<sup>144</sup> Warburg 2003, p.144-5

<sup>145</sup> Warburg 2003, p. 145

of federalism as a step towards separation and upheld the policy of Islamization as a way towards national unity.<sup>146</sup>

While the north and the south were diametrically opposed on these issues, the northern politicians failed to involve different political opinions in the process of constitution-making. Kristine Mo in her master's thesis *Contested Constitutions* argues that this failure must be seen in context of the political climate between the northern parties. With the changing political alliances and sectarian politics in the north, the concept of an Islamic constitution was a topic where the parties at least found some common ground – implementing this could be a measure to obtain some political stability.<sup>147</sup> At the same time, Islamist thinkers argued that Muslim rights were threatened if the country did not adopt an Islamic Constitution, that the issue was “*part and parcel of their basic human rights*”.<sup>148</sup> The southern resistance and the complex state of northern politics ultimately led to the failure of the constitution. Finally presenting a draft to the Assembly in April 1958, it had not yet been promulgated when General Ibrahim Abboud took power through a military coup on November 17, 1958.<sup>149</sup>

### ***The ECS and the parliamentary period***

On the day of independence, January 1<sup>st</sup>, 1956, Bishop Allison published a letter in the *Sudan Diocesan Review*, outlining the situation for the ECS in the newly independent country. In it he wrote that:

The withdrawal of so many of the British from the Sudan has inevitably meant the reduction of the main resources of the Church both in men and means. It has come at a time when the Diocese, particularly the young Church of the Southern Archdeaconry, is faced with an immense number of problems further complicated by the Southern disturbances... The Church may yet be greatly strengthened by its testing, and by the increased responsibilities it must bear.<sup>150</sup>

The southern unrest and state of emergency had, as earlier noted, led to the closure of all the missionary schools in the south. By September 1956, however, Allison could report that even

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<sup>146</sup> Johnson 2003, p. 30

<sup>147</sup> Mo 2014 “Contested Constitutions”, p. 40

<sup>148</sup> Sidahmed 1996, p. 65

<sup>149</sup> Warburg 2003, p. 145

<sup>150</sup> Sudan Diocesan Review Spring 1956, p. 11

though the emergency act was still in place, nearly all of the schools had reopened. Bishop Gwynne College in Juba reported on a record number of students, having appointed its first Sudanese vice-principal. Not all of the institutions were back to normal – three of the Governmental programs, namely Rumbek Secondary School, Mundri Teacher Training College and Juba Commercial School were moved to the north for security reasons.<sup>151</sup> According to Allison, the church also welcomed record numbers into its congregations, stating that they in many cases had become larger than ever before – that he, along with Bishop Daniel Deng, had confirmed well over 2500 people each in the last three months of 1956.<sup>152</sup>

#### *Educational policy in the parliamentary period*

Already in its first year of operating, the government announced its initial plans for taking over full responsibility for all education in the southern territories. In a bulletin by Bishop Allison in the *Sudan Diocesan Review* (SDR), he appeared to be cautiously optimistic for what this declaration would entail for the ECS, writing that this decision “not necessarily” would mean the taking-over of Church and Mission Schools – that the Minister had previously stated that some non-Government schools would be able to stay like they were in the new government scheme. On the role of the Mission schools he further wrote that:

There is, I believe, every intention that Christian Teachers shall be made responsible for, and indeed equipped for, the teaching of Christian Faith to all those who are Christian or opt for teaching in Christianity ...I believe there is good reason to hope that we shall be able to continue to give a vital contribution to the rising generation in the new Sudan through our share in the educational programme. That is certainly our wish.<sup>153</sup>

For context it is important to point out that the Missionaries and the ECS were not inherently opposed to the idea of nationalization of the educational system. As early as 1945 the then-Director of Education in the Condominium had laid out a natural order for what he called “*three stages of educational evolution*” in the Sudan. The first stage in this development was the virtual educational monopoly enjoyed by the mission in the south, the second where the State takes a share in the educational development, and the third and final where education

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<sup>151</sup> de Saram 1992, p. 235

<sup>152</sup> SDR Spring 1957, p. 3

<sup>153</sup> SDR Spring 1956, p. 7

primarily is the responsibility of the state, with a “*firmly established Church playing its part in the spiritual life of the whole people*”.<sup>154</sup> In the view of many missionaries, including de Saram, the government take-over initially indicated that the educational development in Sudan was on the verge of reaching stage three.

When the government unveiled the new educational policy on February 13<sup>th</sup>, 1957, the ramifications for the Mission Schools were evidently more far-reaching than Allison had hoped only a year earlier. Through the promulgation of the “Non-Government Schools Ordinance”, the Mission Schools were nationalized on par with the State-run schools, stating among other that “*no new Non-Muhammedan religious schools shall be opened without the consent of the Council of Ministers*”.<sup>155</sup> While the government framed the Ordinance as undertaking one of its fundamental responsibilities by nationalizing education all over the country, the Missionaries were led to believe that they would, after the takeover, be allowed to open new schools with their own funding.<sup>156</sup> This would prove to be a difficult process.

Between the initial announcement of the nationalizing of Education in 1956 and the Ordinance in 1957, the intentions of the Sudan Government had changed. Writing in SDR in Autumn 1957, de Saram, at this point General Secretary of the ECS, he stated that the CMS initially were “very largely in agreement” with the minister of Education. He had been given personal assurance that the Mission Schools would be able to co-exist side by side with the Government-run.<sup>157</sup> Allison on his part, recalls that the Minister of Education communicated his decision directly to the Heads of Mission, circumventing the ECS altogether – even Allison, as Bishop and head of the church, were not invited to meet with the Minister. On the decision itself, he reiterates that the missions did not have much ground to object on the matter:

The Minister made it crystal clear that the Government had made its decision to «nationalize» these schools, and that their declared policy was to take full and direct responsibility for all education in the South. This involved in the end taking over all the existing Mission Schools. There was no question of the Mission Heads being asked

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<sup>154</sup> Triningham 1949 “The Christian Church in Post-War Sudan”, p. 17, cited from de Saram 1992, p. 133

<sup>155</sup> Letter from Secretary of the CMS to Governor of Equatoria, 18.08.1959

<sup>156</sup> Deng 1994, p. 98

<sup>157</sup> SDR Autumn 1957, p. 7

whether they would agree, or whether others would. There was no other course but for the Missions to accept loyally the decision.<sup>158</sup>

### ***Abboud's Military Government 1958-1964***

General Ibrahim Abboud's military coup on November 17<sup>th</sup>, 1958 overthrew the government of Abdalla Khalil. As his first steps as leader, Abboud suspended the temporary constitution, abolished all political parties and dissolved the parliament. The coup had come as a result of several factors; a worsening economy, which Abboud attributed to the weakness of the current administration, and the growing political movement of southern federalism.<sup>159</sup>

### ***Arabization policies in education***

With the growing Federalist Party in the south at odds with the ruling northern parties, many in the north saw it as paramount to pursue programs of Arabization and Islamization in the south. A few months after the nationalization of the Mission Schools, Sayyid Ali al-Mirghani, leader of the Khatmiyya declared that his "*sole ambition and desire was to see Islam spread throughout the Southern Provinces*".<sup>160</sup> An important development in Khalil's period was the creation of the *Department of Religious Affairs* in 1957. The department was created to oversee programs reflecting Islamic Doctrine, and its spread to the Southern Provinces. This involved heavy investment in Islamic religious education, meaning the building of *ma'ahads*, schools for Islamic studies in the south.<sup>161</sup>

While the take-over of the missionary schools in 1957 meant a loss of control for the missionaries, many southerners had not objected to the move as they felt that it was a matter of unification of the school curriculum in the south and the north, that the people in the south, in line with what the government promised, would profit from a higher standard of education and be better able to progress along the same lines as their northern counterparts. On the eve of Abboud's takeover, the reigning feeling amongst the southern population was one of disappointment – the educational standard remained very much unchanged, and southerners began to fear that the motivation behind the act was to "*retard education, isolate and insulate*

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<sup>158</sup> SDR Autumn 1957, p. 7

<sup>159</sup> Poggo 2002 "General Ibrahim Abboud's Military Administration in the Sudan, 1958-1964", p. 71-2

<sup>160</sup> Poggo 2009, p. 92

<sup>161</sup> Poggo 2002, p. 73

*the Church and to impose Islam*”<sup>162</sup> on the south. In the first years of General Abboud’s rule, the monetary subsidies to the Department of Religious Affairs were increased considerably. The program for building *ma’ahads* and *khalwas*<sup>163</sup> was implemented, and during the course of Abboud’s rule the Department projected the creation of 18 Islamic intermediary and one secondary school in the south.<sup>164</sup>

#### *Arabization of the southern administration*

In addition to the establishment of Islamic education, Abboud’s government set about a wide-reaching effort to decree Arabic as the administrative language not only in the academic institutions, but also in southern government offices. This represented a problem for many southerners who were not sufficiently fluent in Arabic, and thus effectively barred them from taking office.<sup>165</sup> In 1960 General Abboud revoked the rights enjoyed by the traditional chiefs in the southern provinces, the *Chief Courts Ordinance* of 1931, as a part of the British Indirect Rule. Under this ordinance the native chiefs in the south had been able to administer local laws and customs under the framework of the government, but Abboud now sought to replace these traditional African customs with Islamic law. According to a 1964 editorial in the magazine *Voices of Southern Sudan*,<sup>166</sup> the chiefs were ordered to “*become moslems or forfeit their authority*”. Reportedly the chiefs who accepted conversion were flown to Khartoum and celebrated in a banquet, before having their names announced as Muslims on the state-run Radio Omdurman. The chiefs who opposed were, according to the editorial deposed, with “willing-horses” installed in their places.<sup>167</sup> It must however be pointed out that “Voices of Southern Sudan” was a magazine published by the Sudan African National Union, a party operating from exile in Uganda and seeking autonomy for the south, and therefore not without bias.

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<sup>162</sup> Poggo 2002, p. 73

<sup>163</sup> Khalwa is an exclusively Sudanese term for a Islamic religious school, meaning Koranic schools or seminaries.

<sup>164</sup> Poggo 2002, p. 73

<sup>165</sup> Poggo 2002, p. 75

<sup>166</sup> Published by the Sudan African National Union

<sup>167</sup> *Voices of Southern Sudan* no. 1 1964, p. 2

## *The ECS under the Military Government*

### *Restrictions on mission activity*

For the ECS, the *Non-Government School Ordinance of 1957* immediately began to cause friction between the church and the government. The main reason was that the ordinance stated that “*no new Non-Muhammedan religious schools*” were to be opened without consent of the Ministry. The church and the government were from an early point in disagreement of exactly what constituted as religious education. This quickly became an issue regarding the ECS’ traditions of preparations for baptism. In August 1959 a letter was sent on behalf of Ali Baldo,<sup>168</sup> Governor of Equatoria, to representatives of all missions in the Sudan, stating that several religious Seminaries and Catechumens<sup>169</sup> have been discovered to be in breach of the Ordinance. According to the letter these institutions had not been viewed by the missions as directly impacted by the ordinance, but it had now been ruled by the Government as a part of the definition of “religious schools” – and under this definition required to obtain a permit from the government. Failing to do so would be a “*serious offense punishable by law*”.<sup>170</sup>

For the church and the missions, this was a development with potentially severe consequences. In a follow-up exchange with Baldo and the Ministry of Interior, Bishop Allison tried to explain that the seminaries in question was, in fact, examples of religious expression. This specifically concerns the definition of the word “catechumens”, which Allison explained was a form of individual and purely religious instruction, as a preparation for baptism. Allison argued that these instructions took place in prayer centers, which purely are places of worship, and that regulation of these would restrict religious freedom.<sup>171</sup> In the reply from Hassan Ali Abdullah, Permanent Under Secretary of the Interior, he stated that the government “*respects the feeling of the citizen to choose the faith he wants without prejudice*”, but that the government had “*full right to exercise powers of regularizing religious institutions and set in motion the provision of the laws without detriment to the interests of the country or its citizens*”.<sup>172</sup>

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<sup>168</sup> Ali Baldo’s motivation is discussed further below.

<sup>169</sup> «Catechumens» here refers to the process that prepared a person for Christian baptism. This consisted of education in religious matters, but were not confined to a particular space or building – catechumen classes could be held in a number of different spaces, outside or inside.

<sup>170</sup> Letter from Bishop Allison to the Ministry of the Interior, p.1, 15.09.1959, SAD 809/1/18

<sup>171</sup> Letter from Bishop Allison to the Ministry of the Interior, p. 3, 15.09.1959, SAD 809/1/20

<sup>172</sup> Reply from Hassan Ali Abdulla of the Ministry of the Interior, 29.12.1959 SAD 809/1/21

From the days of the Condominium, Sunday had been the official day of rest in the south, but in February of 1960, Abboud's government changed the day of rest to Friday. This act had severe political and economic ramifications, and soon after the students of Rumbek Secondary School in Bahr-al Ghazal, the only English-speaking secondary school left in the south, went on strike. The students viewed the act as a way to impose Islam and undermine their Christianity, and soon after all intermediary schools in the south followed. As a result of this, three strike leaders at Rumbek were arrested and sentenced to ten years imprisonment, and schools were closed down in all parts of the south. A Sudanese Catholic priest named Father Paulino Dogale was arrested and sentenced to 12 years imprisonment (later reduced to 5) and accused of "masterminding the strike".<sup>173</sup>

As a response to changing the day of rest from Sunday to Friday, the "Sudan Archdeaconry Council" in 1960 sent a petition to president Abboud, asking him to reconsider: "*The Council recognizes thankfully the peace and order which the Government gives to the people of the Sudan, and respectfully asks that the Order may be reconsidered, since it is a burden upon the conscience of a great number of loyal citizens*".<sup>174</sup> Baldo's response to this further worsened the relationship between members of government and the missions. The reply stated that the petition came as a great disappointment, and that the line of action undertaken by the council, by discussing at liberty and openly criticizing a declared government decision as well as petitioning the president, was a:

...Sharp and unwarranted dereliction of the rules under which your Archdeaconry Council as a Missionary Institution preaching religion only is expected to confine itself... I must bring it home to you and other churchmen, whether Sudanese or Foreigners, that hostile actions of this nature amounting to such serious opposition and obstruction of Government Policy, which amounts to a Criminal Offence, will not be tolerated and will not pass unquestionable. It is high time that you and your advisors should have exactly known the limits and scope of your religious activities and should have abided by it. However, you have to be informed that the Government is taking a very serious view of this hostile attitude and your objectionable petition is therefore returned herewith.<sup>175</sup>

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<sup>173</sup> Poggo 2002, p. 79-80

<sup>174</sup> Petition from Sudan Southern Archdeaconry Council to Ali Baldo, 15.02.1960, SAD/809/1/26

<sup>175</sup> Reply from Ali Baldo with copies to heads of churches in the Sudan, 14.03.1960, 809/1/27



In a follow-up letter from Baldo to the CMS, with copies to many institutions in the Episcopal Church of the Sudan, he makes his views on the missions clear, outlining how he feels they had been contrary to the interests of the country:

Much as we cannot disguise history we can no longer, after having been compelled to do so by the Missions, keep secret the prejudiced and harmful part which they had played in furthering the policy of the old regime which had made them the instrument for the disunity of the Sudan that policy which had been especially designed for the Southern Provinces and which had been energetically perused to minutest detail had as its components four main objectives which were: -

- a) The division of the Country and the isolation of the South and its separation from the North by misleading the Southerners and by intriguing against their brothers and benefactors – the Northerners of which the 1955 tragedy was the natural results.
- b) The building up of Christian prestige and the humiliation of other religious and Islam in particular.
- c) The insistence on a degrading standard of living for the Southerners and hence the special wages and scales.
- d) The exclusion of the teaching of Arabic language and culture in school syllabuses.

Baldo further makes it clear that by admitting the failures and faults of the old regime, and abandoning and reversing their policies, it is only natural and reasonable for the present government to not tolerate any attitudes from the missions, which might “*undermine the safety and the sovereignty of this Republic*”, and expect them to show “*genuine appreciation of our objectives and more adaptability to changing circumstances and to the needs of the free Independent United Sudan*”. Having said this, Baldo recognizes that the CMS had “*often been relatively co-operative but for the last serious incident*”. Referencing a letter of apology sent by CMS secretary Christopher Cook, he calls this a gesture of goodwill and understanding, in which the CMS had accepted the government’s policy of freedom of religion “*as an example of our tolerance which spring from our inherent respect for other religions and our keen desire that they should enjoy freedom of action within the framework of our declared policy in the interest of Sudan’s unity*”.<sup>176</sup>

Further correspondence concerning this petition and its response from the government shows Bishop Allison trying to distance the CMS from what he terms the “misunderstanding” surrounding the petition. According to him, the “Southern Archdeaconry Council” was not in any way a mission institution, but a council concerned both with preaching of religion and

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<sup>176</sup> Letter from Ali Baldo to representatives for all Christian missions, 17.03.1960, SAD 809/1/29

with the building up of the church. Allison clarifies that the petition was sent on behalf of the Sudanese members of the council, and that the membership of the council largely is Sudanese, with only a few expatriate members which represent a “very small minority” in the church. Lastly, Allison expresses a hope that the “*mutual co-operation and the friendly personal relations*” between the mission and the government would not be affected by the incident, and that they in fact “*trust that the Churches of the Sudan will be recognized as an integral part of the life of the Independent Republic and further, that its Councils will be recognized also as being able to speak on behalf of all their fellow-Christians who are citizens*”.<sup>177</sup>

The following years saw continued regulations placed on missionary activity, and by 1960 the missions were banned from obtaining business licenses. This had implications for the CMS-owned bookshop in Juba, the only source in the south for Christian religious and educational supplies, which was forced to close on grounds that religious organizations were forbidden to trade. After an intervention from Bishop Allison to Gen. Abboud, this order was modified to allow for distribution of Christian books to Christians at cost price.<sup>178</sup>

From 1960-61, an increasing number of British missionaries were barred from re-entry into the Sudan after returning from leave. Revd. John Parry was set to become the Archdeacon in the newly created Southern Archdeaconry, but in June 1960 order came from the Interior Ministry that the Reverend and his wife would not be allowed to return to any of the Southern Provinces, but that he could be stationed in Khartoum.<sup>179</sup> Responding to this, Bishop Allison accepted the government’s decision, but commented on a point which the government itself seemed to be unclear on:

I should, I think, emphasise that the post which I wish to fill is concerned with the administration of the Church as it exists, and is not connected with missionary activities as such. I say this because I know from experience that some confusion exists in the minds of a number of people on this point which I regard as one of radical importance.<sup>180</sup>

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<sup>177</sup> Letter from Bishop Allison to Baldo, 22.03.1960, SAD 809/1/30

<sup>178</sup> de Saram 1992, p. 245

<sup>179</sup> Letter from Ministry of the Interior to Bishop Allison, 29.06.1960, SAD 809/1/38

<sup>180</sup> Letter from Bishop Allison to Ministry of the Interior, 08.07.1960, SAD 809/1/39

In the autumn of 1961, more people were ordered to leave the country; One missionary had spent ten years facilitating girls' education among the Azande, another as Agriculturalist at the Church Agricultural Training farm which was now overtaken by the government, and Mr. and Mrs. George Bennett, who had worked as Church Literature Secretary and co-ordained the production and distribution of Christian literature in vernacular languages, as well as providing material for Arabic literacy in the schools.<sup>181</sup> However, the most radical governmental regulation of the missions was issued in May of 1962, with the imposition of the *Missionary Societies Act*.

### *The Missionary Societies Act 1962*

With the imposition of the Missionary Societies Act, the missions in Sudan were required by government order to obtain a license from the Council of Ministers to continue their activities in the country. The act stated that “*No Missionary Society or any member thereof shall do any missionary act in the Sudan except in accordance with the terms of license granted*”, requiring the missions to specify in their application the religion, as well as the region or places they wished to operate. The act also specifically prohibited any missionary society from interfering in “any political activity of any kind” and practice any social activities except “within the limits”, and with approval of the Council of Ministers. In addition, the act prohibited the societies from bringing up or admitting any person under the age of eighteen to any religious order, without the consent of a guardian. This consent, however, would have to be “*reduced to writing before a person appointed for that purpose by the Province Authority*”. Any Missionary Society or member of one of these who were found to be in violation of the provision, could be subject to fines or prison sentence.<sup>182</sup>

In a statement from the Minister of the Interior, the provisions of the act were defended on the grounds that the government were attempting to preserve and protect the religious freedom of the people in the Sudan:

As freedom of belief and religion is one of the basic principles advocated by the Revolutionary Govt. and confirmed on more than one occasion, the Govt, decided that it was necessary to introduce such a law to regulate the activities of the Missionary Societies in the Sudan and to ensure for them the adequate freedom and safeguards to carry out their religious activities and protect their interests, determining their responsibilities and duties and organizing their relations with the various Govt. machines,

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<sup>181</sup> de Saram 1992, p. 245-6

<sup>182</sup> The Missionary Societies Act of 1962, SAD 804/8/1-2

so that they may be able to carry out their duties and activities in freedom and in a satisfactory way in an atmosphere dominated by co-operation, completed understanding and mutual confidence...In conclusion I would like to point out that the Government hereby assures all the citizens that they can carry out their sacred religious activities in complete freedom as long as it is the intention of all to preserve and protect the country's interest and observe the law and keep the order.<sup>183</sup>

In the "Bishops letter" in *Sudan Diocesan Review* the following autumn, Bishop Allison commented on some of the ramifications this act could have on the future action of the church. In the letter he comments that because the act clearly states that the act of any individual member is treated as the acts of the whole mission, this implies that any infringement on the terms by any member could be ground for revoking the Mission's license. As the Minister under the act was allowed to make regulations carrying out its provisions, this made it difficult to foresee exactly what the implications of the act would be. As Allison concludes: "*Enough has been said to show that the provisions of the Act are very far-reaching; and only experience will show to what extent they will vitally affect the freedom of the Church and the ability of the Missions to serve the Church in the Sudan*".<sup>184</sup> An answer to this came on February 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1964, when all foreign missionaries were expelled from the Southern Provinces.

#### *Expulsion of foreign missionaries from the south*

Between 1962 and 1963 over 240 foreign missionaries, mainly Roman Catholic, had been expelled from the Sudan, both through deportation and refusal of re-entry into the country after leave. The declaration in February 1964 ordered the remaining 300 missionaries stationed in the south to leave the country.<sup>185</sup> In a memorandum on the reasons for the expulsion, General Mohammed Ahmed Irwa, the Interior Minister, accused the foreign missionaries of trying to instigate the people in the Southern Provinces against the government, stating that:

It has now been proved beyond doubt that the foreign missionary organizations have gone beyond the limits of their sacred mission. They persistently worked inside and outside the Sudan against the stability and internal security of the country. They particularly instigated the people in the Southern Provinces against the Government and encouraged them to break the law. They also exploited the name of religion to impart hatred and

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<sup>183</sup> «Statement on Missionary Societies Act, 1962», SAD 804/8/6-7

<sup>184</sup> SDR Autumn 1962, p. 6

<sup>185</sup> Sidahmed 1996, p. 72

implant fear and animosity in the minds of the Southerners against their fellow-countrymen in the North with the clear object of encouraging the setting up of a separate political status for the Southern Provinces thus endangering the integrity and unity of the country. Furthermore and in order to achieve their objective they instigated disturbances and acts of violence which resulted in bloodshed, disorder and loss of property in some parts of the Southern Provinces.<sup>186</sup>

In a statement the Council of Ministers agreed on how the process of expulsion was to be carried out. All foreign priests and missionaries in the three Southern Provinces were to be “repatriated”, and foreign merchants were no longer allowed to operate in villages and in the bush, having to settle in District and Province headquarters. At the same time, the Council in the statement also pledged to assist the churches in carrying out their religious mission in a manner which *would “ensure their stability and continuity without any interference”*, and also to offer financial assistance to Sudanese priests, endeavoring to qualify them for various religious posts.<sup>187</sup>

For the ECS, the numbers of missionaries affected was limited. In numbers given by the government, only 14 CMS missionaries were reported operating in the south and subject for expulsion, and of these only six were present in the country at the time.<sup>188</sup> Bishop Allison were also allowed to operate in the Sudan, although with minimal contact with the south. By comparison, The Roman Catholic Church had 272 missionaries expelled from the country; while this could be seen as a number corresponding to the respective sizes of the churches. It also reflects that the Catholic church was much more reliant on foreign missionaries than the ECS, who had expanded its process of training Sudanese clergy since the reversal of the Southern Policy in 1946. The few Sudanese Catholic Priests, on the other hand, had trouble operating due to insecurity and the sheer vastness of the areas under their parochial care.<sup>189</sup>

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<sup>186</sup> Memorandum on Reasons That Led to the Expulsion of Foreign Missionaries and Priests from the Southern Provinces of the Sudan, March 1964, from de Saram 1992, p. 247

<sup>187</sup> Enosa 1999 “The Expulsion of the Missionaries from Southern Sudan - 1964” from *But God is Not Defeated*, p. 94

<sup>188</sup> de Saram 1992, p. 248

<sup>189</sup> Enosa 1999, p. 95

### *The view from Khartoum*

The process of unification and Sudanization had, as we have seen, been set in motion even before independence was achieved on January 1st, 1956. As the first parliamentary period descended into chaos and infighting between sectarian rivals, the issue that represented the most common ground between the parties was that of an Islamic constitution. While the constitution eventually failed, it did bring about a consensus among most of the northern politicians that the Sudan ultimately should be an Islamic republic, dismissing the southern Federalist party and thus declaring the Southern Provinces under Islamic law. Islamization and Arabization of the south were also ideals shared by General Abboud after 1958. With the abolishment of political parties and declaration of emergency Abboud had even less political resistance against imposing his program of Islamization, evident from a rapid creation of Mosques and Islamic educational facilities in the south.

For the missions operating in the south on the eve of independence, it is evident that northern politicians early on recognized them as an obstacle to the government's policies in the south. Already in 1957 a letter from the District Commissioner in Eastern Equatoria to the Governor in Equatoria stated that *"we have suffered a lot from the missionaries in the South, and so it may be time to limit their expansion and powers until the time we have better control and grip on the present existing situation"*.<sup>190</sup> With the nationalization of the Mission Schools through the "Non-Government Schools Ordinance" in 1957, the government had taken its first steps towards regulation of the missions in the south.

The nationalization of the schools was presented through the ideal of unification of the syllabuses in the south and the north, in order to prepare southerners for more active participation in administrative positions. By 1956 the Mission Schools did not have a good reputation in the north. The missionaries were seen as increasing the divide between the south and the north by promoting Christianity and failing to adopt Arabic, thus making even the educated southerners ineligible for government jobs in the north. In his book *Sudan: The Christian Design*, described as *"a Sudanese point of view of the history, role and dimensions of the Christian mission activities in Sudan"*, author Hasan Makki Mohamed Ahmed points to

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<sup>190</sup> Letter from Marwood, Governor of Equatoria, to the Deputy Governor of Bahr el-Ghazal, 23.12.1948, cited in Deng 1994, p. 98

the missionary activities in the south as an important factor for the division and political instability in the newly-independent country. On the subject of missionary schools, Makki describes their educational policy in the following manner:

There was a lack of common educational policy among the missions themselves, hardly any liaison or co-operation, and no guidance from the government... The Catholics were full of enthusiasm to teach the simple-minded southern Sudanese the history of the Holy Romanic Empire, to glorify its wars and methods; the Austrian Mission was basically concerned with the Holy Roman Empire of the German nation under German emperors; the Protestants were keen to propagate Martin Luther, Calvinism and the complexities of Western church and culture; the Anglicans were intent on upholding the glory of England. The educational process was reduced to stories of business by biased sects. Cultural chaos prevailed. The student was bombarded with biblical legends, irrelevant syllabus and literature. They created a Sudanese who fits in Europe but not Sudan, a new Sudanese with European mentality, European history and European aspirations.<sup>191</sup>

In Makki's view, the southern students were "*victims of alien education which condemned them to isolationism*". Further, since the missions had failed to accept the unity of Sudan, they also failed to promote a southern national identity able to look to the welfare of the whole of the Sudan. The missions had, according to Makki, for several decades encouraged the educated southern elite to agitate against the north, writing that: "*The missionaries had sown in the hearts of many the seeds of hatred that were to be with always and embitter their lives*".<sup>192</sup>

For Abboud's Government, correspondence from Hassan Ali Abdullah, Permanent Undersecretary of the Ministry of the Interior shows that the government's policy of restricting the missionary activities was in place at least by 1960. In a letter to the governors of three southern provinces, Abdullah asked the Governors to keep the information secret in fear of counter-measures and backlash from the world press, and describes the intention of promulgating further restrictions on the missions:

The policy of restricting the activity of the missions in the religious sphere in order to protect the country from the danger of their success is now entering upon a decisive phase, after full inquiries on various matters and an exchange of opinions. I ask the governors to keep this policy secret, so that the missionaries do not learn anything of our intentions, and will thus be able to find any counter measures to our policy or to mobilize the world press and thus try to make an impression on us. Our officials should be very careful not to take an open stand in favour of the victory of a particular religion and they

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<sup>191</sup> Makki 2007 "Sudan: The Christian Design", p.86

<sup>192</sup> Makki 2007, p. 85-6

should give the appearance of supporting all in equal measure. The aim of these precautions is to create the right atmosphere for those responsible, so that the unanimously adopted policy can be laid down calmly and without attracting attention. Thus, it will become a fait accompli without possibility of retraction or amendment.<sup>193</sup>

These restrictions came into place with the imposition of the *Missionary Societies Act* in 1962. While the act limited or removed the missions' ability to proselytize, preach and recruit personnel, the most direct result of the act was to provide a legal framework for the prosecution of missionaries that the government deemed to have broken the provisions in the act. Between 1962 and 1964, 30 Roman Catholics, two CMS and three American missionaries were taken to court and tried under some of the following charges: Indulgence of suspicious activities threatening the unity and security of the country, urging the citizens to rebellion, or helping outlaws by transporting them from one place to another and giving supplies to mutineers.<sup>194</sup> The most significant ramification of the act was, however, that it legally allowed for the government's ultimate goal; the full expulsion of all foreign missionaries in 1964.

The reasons provided by the government in relation to the missionary expulsion were, as earlier cited, many. In his book, Ahmed Makki further clarifies the government's objections against the missionaries as:

1. Working inside and outside the Sudan, against the stability and internal security of the country, by spreading false information against the government, abetting students to strike and assault their Northern teachers and by giving shelter and provision to mutineers.
2. The interference of foreign missionaries in the internal affairs of the country and their participation in local politics, such as: inciting for the separation of the South, preaching against the change of weekly holiday, preaching against the settlement of Northerners in the South and trying to influence the electorate during elections.
3. Breaking the laws by a massive trade in drugs without licence, teaching Christianity to Muslim children and baptizing them without the consent of their families, prompting citizens to pray for the victory of the mutineers, and building churches without permission.<sup>195</sup>

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<sup>193</sup> Secret letter from Hassan Ali Abdullah, Permanent Undersecretary of the Ministry of the Interior, to the governors of three southern provinces, 27.07.1960, cited from Deng 1994, p. 96

<sup>194</sup> Deng 1994, p. 99

<sup>195</sup> Makki 2007, p.103



Makki further states that the decision came as a result of the Church's inability to change its pre-independence mentality, failing to recognize that the south was no longer closed to the north, and that a convert to Islam was no longer a "lost soul".<sup>196</sup> Much of the government's resentment against the missionaries did however seemingly come from the actions of the missionaries of the Catholic Church. In Makki's analysis an important factor in the deteriorating relationship between the missions and the government was the Catholic missionaries "hard-line" attitude; that the Catholics had refused to co-operate with the government on issues such as the nationalization of education, with their insistence on its "divine rights" in regards to education.<sup>197</sup>

Most of the instances of what the government deemed as infringements on the Missionary Societies Act also involved missionaries from the Catholic mission. Some of the more publicized instances of this was Father Paulino Dogale who initially was arrested for masterminding the strikes in the south following the imposition of Friday as the day of rest in the south, and perhaps with more direct ramifications, Father Giovanni Trivella, who in 1964 was arrested and jailed as a collaborator with the southern resistance in the newly inflamed civil war, for calling the government "evil".<sup>198</sup> The government also viewed the Catholic Church's use of the media as spreading false information against the government. Makki, for example, refers to what he calls a "Catholic press campaign" against the government, citing a press release in response to the announcement of nationalization of the educational sector. This is presented as an example of press coverage that the government viewed as designed to create international concern about the mission education in 1956:

Crisis looms in the Sudan. No personal protection for the missionaries... This is the latest of many blows to the missionary work [in] the newly Independent Sudan... From the missionaries' point of view, the situation is rapidly going from bad to worse... The problems now arising in the Sudan may well be repeated, as one Islamic people after another gains its independence.<sup>199</sup>

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<sup>196</sup> Makki 2007, p. 104

<sup>197</sup> Makki 2007, p. 86

<sup>198</sup> Facsimile from «The Catholic Transcript», 07.03.1963:

<https://thecatholicnewsarchive.org/?a=d&d=CTR19630307-01.2.11&> WEB: 10.03.2019

<sup>199</sup> Catholic Herald, 01.06.1956, cited from Makki 2007, p. 161

### ***The ECS' relations with Abboud's government***

For the ECS, relations with Abboud's Military Government went through a number of iterations. Independence in 1956 was met by the ECS with an expression of quiet confidence and hopes of retaining a good working relationship with the government, and with the announcement of nationalization of the educational sector in 1956, the church initially had received assurance that they would be able to run the mission schools in the south side-by-side with the government ones. The imposition of the "*non-Government Schools Ordinance*" in 1957 was however evidently pushed through without conferring with either the heads of the missions or the Bishop himself, allowing for the governmental take-over of the mission schools.

With Abboud's government, the already existing legal framework concerning mission education was used in new ways, and a person with an especially rigorous view of the provisions was Ali Baldo. In an article from the *Journal of African History*, 2015, Justin Wills describes Governor Baldo as having become notorious as 'the little Hitler of Equatoria', and further as "*a man committed to the coercive project of cultural hegemony which sought to unify 'the Sudan' in the image of its own nationalist vision of Arabism, bureaucracy and modernism*".<sup>200</sup> Baldo was inherently opposed to the idea of federalism – reportedly making clear to all the chiefs in Equatoria that anyone mentioning the word "federation" would be shot.<sup>201</sup> He was also, according to Wills, regularly harassing southern politicians and placing harsh restrictions on their meetings. Baldo in Wills' analysis viewed the south as collectively different from the north, which in turn legitimized his authoritarian behavior and intolerance to diversity.<sup>202</sup>

In this context it is interesting to revisit the correspondence between the ECS and Baldo. As early as 1959, Baldo as earlier cited sent a letter to the representatives of all missions present in the Sudan, stating that several religious seminaries and Cathecumens had been ruled as in the violation of the Ordinance of 1957. This ruling severely restricted not just the mission's ability to provide education in the south, but also the building of churches and prayer centers

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<sup>200</sup> Wills 2015 "The Southern Problem: Representing Sudan's Southern Provinces to c. 1970", p. 8

<sup>201</sup> Poggo 2009, p. 92

<sup>202</sup> Wills 2015, p. 8

in the south. The fact that “Cathecumens” were ruled as illegal religious schools, extended the scope of the Ordinance beyond the mission schools and into a central part of the organization of spiritual life in the church itself.

This lack of differentiation between the roles of the mission and the church itself is something that can be seen repeated through much of the correspondence cited in this chapter. After the Southern Archdeaconry Council sent its petition to reverse the decision of making Friday the day of rest in 1960, Baldo’s response was as we have seen extremely harsh, accusing the Council of a “*hostile action*” and declaring that any serious opposition to Government policy would “*unquestionably*” not be tolerated. The missions should, in Baldo’s view confine themselves solely to preaching religion, and show “*genuine appreciation*” and adaptability to the “*changing circumstances*” in the country, in other words not question the government’s policy and accept any political changes without reservation or objection.<sup>203</sup> This command was further complicated by the fact that the Southern Archdeaconry Council was not a missionary institution, but mainly consisting of Sudanese clergy, concerned with the building up of the church in Sudan. This also became a problem with the closing of the CMS bookshop in Juba. While the missions were prohibited to trade, efforts to transfer the bookshop to the church itself also failed on grounds that this directive also affected the church as a religious institution; only intervention from General Abboud prevented the ECS from being without access to religious literature and supplies.

#### *Abboud’s role*

While Ali Baldo seems to have been the main person responsible for implementing the government’s policy in relation to the missions, a report from Bishop Allison’s meeting with General Abboud in 1960 provides a fascinating insight in what the President appeared to be aware of in regard to Baldo’s restrictions on the ECS and the missions. In this note, Allison firstly described the current status of the ECS in Sudan. He explained that the church in later years had been almost entirely Sudanized, and that there in Equatoria alone were more than six hundred churches and parishes, adding that all former mission stations were now Sudanese parishes under Sudanese priests. Allison further attempted to clarify the involvement of the

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<sup>203</sup> Letter from Ali Baldo to representatives for all Christian missions, 17.03.1960, SAD 809/1/29

missions in the building up of the church by stating that he “*rubbed in the fact that many of these congregations had come into being without any work of foreign missionaries*”, instead highlighting that this was a “*spontaneous growth of the church as a result of preaching of the Christian faith by Sudanese*”.

After establishing this, Allison discussed some of the issues that had caused problems for the church in the south, firstly Governor Baldo’s order from 1959, restricting the scope of religious education in the south on grounds of violating the non-Government Schools Ordinance. This led to the following exchange:

I then came to the first matter which had caused considerable concern in the Church of the Southern Provinces (...). This was the order given in 1959 that no Village Churches or “Catechumens” could be built or opened in the future without the express approval of the Council of Ministers here in Khartoum. He immediately expressed great surprise, and said “What!? Village Churches?!”. I replied, “Yes Sir. Any building at all, even a tiny little prayer center far from the main road”.<sup>204</sup>

According to Allison’s report, while the news of these restrictions seemingly took General Abboud by surprise, he also promised to investigate. Allison further reports that the President “*seemed rather upset, and told me he would get in touch with the Minister of the Interior, to find out the position, and the reasons for this order. He obviously did not like it*”.

A similar exchange took place when the Bishop brought up the subject of the closing of the CMS bookshop. After having begun an account on the significant role the bookshop had in providing the Southern Provinces with Christian literature and school material, Allison was interrupted:

When in the middle of my account, he [Abboud] suddenly leaned over his desk and said “And what has happened to it now?”. I replied; “Well, Sir, as you ask me now, the answer is “It has been closed down by order of the Governor Equatoria”. This seemed to come as a shock, and he smilingly said, “Really; you know they never tell me anything”; (This was said again later). He went on. “Do you mean that your Christians cannot now have

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<sup>204</sup> Note titled «Summary and Impressions of my Interview with President Abboud on Wednesday August 24<sup>th</sup>, 1960”, SAD 803/11/1

Bibles and Prayer Books and other Christian literature distributed there?” I replied, “Yes, Sir, that is the position.”<sup>205</sup>

What these excerpts appears to show is an apparent disconnect between the policies and restrictions imposed by Ali Baldo, the Governor of Equatoria, and the President’s view of the Christian institutions in the south. While we have seen how Baldo’s vision of Arabism included a degree of coercion and intolerance to diversity, Abboud is referenced by Allison as having “*spoken with spontaneous sincerity*” about freedom of religion; believing that religion was part of the heart, and that all people should be free to both choose and practice their religion freely.

Whether or not Allison’s account reflects Abboud’s true intentions, or to what degree he was or was not involved or knew about Baldo’s policies in Equatoria, the fact that he appeared to be unaware did much to help establish a direct channel between the ECS and the highest level of government. When any level of negotiation or discussion failed due to Baldo’s relatively authoritarian views of outside interference with government matters, the ECS was proactive in bringing the matters directly to the attention of the President, circumventing the office of Governor completely. After seemingly having failed get the point across to Baldo, it was important for the church to, as Allison said, “*rub in*” that the ECS by 1960 was an inherently Sudanese religious institution, and not just an outpost of foreign missionaries operating in the country. This personal link to the President also gave results; based on this meeting alone, Allison was able to arrange that religious literature would be sold to Christians at cost-price. Closing the report Allison expressed hope of what this new link to the President could achieve:

One can only hope that this personal link will at least have helped towards understanding; and that he may be able interpret what I tried to get across to others, and to influence them towards a more friendly (or should we say, a less hostile) approach towards the Church in the Sudan as a whole. One is conscious of forces at work, both within and without; and that the President has pressures upon him; but at least one feels that the interview gave the opportunity to sow the seed, however imperfectly.<sup>206</sup>

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<sup>205</sup> Note titled «Summary and Impressions of my Interview with President Abboud on Wednesday August 24<sup>th</sup>, 1960”, p. 2, SAD 803/11/2

<sup>206</sup> Note titled «Summary and Impressions of my Interview with President Abboud on Wednesday August 24<sup>th</sup>, 1960”, p. 3, SAD 803/11/3

### *The CMS and the expulsion of foreign missionaries*

As we have seen, the government's decision to expulse all foreign missionaries in February 1964 came as a result of what it deemed to be a series of violations of the Missionary Societies Act from 1962. For the CMS, this decision came as a surprise. The Anglican mission had since 1956 committed itself to having a co-operative attitude towards the government. When the 1956 Catholic press release in relation to the nationalization of the mission schools, cited earlier in the chapter, led to parliamentary investigation in Britain, the CMS answered that they "*did not know of any discrimination against a British mission school in the Southern Sudan*".<sup>207</sup> From this point it appears to have been a general consensus among government officials that, as Makki writes, the Protestants and CMS were generally more co-operative than the Catholic missionaries.<sup>208</sup> Even Ali Baldo referenced the CMS as having "*often been relatively co-operative*", although this was said in context of his scolding of the missionaries after the petition from the Southern Archdeaconry Council.<sup>209</sup> When the news of the imminent expulsion hit on February 27<sup>th</sup>, 1964, many CMS missionaries presumed that it pertained to the Roman Catholics, and not themselves.<sup>210</sup>

In a letter titled "A Note on the Expulsion of Missionaries from the Southern Sudan", CMS secretary Christopher Cook describes in detail how he received the news. After being summoned to the office of the "Chairman of the Province Council" together with the Catholic Bishop and his secretary, they were told that they were subject to expulsion and had to leave the country. The Chairman further said that he did not have to give any reason for this. Cook describes the ensuing conversation like this:

I at once said that I accepted the fact that our Residence Permits specified that we might have permission withdrawn at any time without any reason being given. The Chairman said he was glad I accepted this. I then went on to say that unfortunately the Government had already broadcast on Omdurman Radio a statement on the expulsion, saying that it was ordered because the missionaries had become engaged in political activities. I said, "You know, Sir, that this is not true." He looked a little disconcerted, and said that at least since he had come to Juba he believed it to be so. He then rounded the R.C.'s, and said that it was not the case with them... and made a reference to some incident I had not heard

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<sup>207</sup> Parliamentary Question, Public Records Office, cited from Makki 2007, p. 163

<sup>208</sup> Makki 2007, p. 102

<sup>209</sup> Letter from Ali Baldo to representatives for all Christian missions, 17.03.1960, SAD 809/1/29

<sup>210</sup> Christopher Cook, «A note on the Expulsion of Missonaries from the Southern Sudan», 08.31.1977, SAD 804/8/67

about, when apparently the priest who was there had broken some regulation. The R.C.'s were silent, and I was uncomfortable at having unwittingly stirred something up.

For Cook, this was the confirmation he needed to conclude that it was not the CMS missionaries who had broken the regulations and caused the expulsion:

I have always been glad that I was able to get from the Chairman this explicit admission that CMS missionaries had not been engaged in activities against the Military Government. We were expelled because it was easy to throw all out together... After that, it was obvious that the local authorities' attitude towards us was quite different from their behavior towards the R.C.'s, mostly of course Italians. They were pretty harshly treated, we were shown every courtesy; and once the R.C.'s had been sent to Khartoum, we were left to leave when it was convenient.<sup>211</sup>

#### *The aftermath of the missionary expulsion*

In the aftermath of the expulsion, Bishop Allison sent a letter to the Minister of the Interior, asking to get the expulsion temporarily revoked for the three missionaries currently in the country, in order to secure a "*satisfactory and thorough hand-over to the Church Authorities*" in the south. In addition, Allison requested that the government issued a statement that none of the British missionaries of the CMS had any accusations of them, and that they had not been guilty of "*abusing the hospitality of the Sudan*".<sup>212</sup> In the reply, Interior Minister Hassan A. Abdalla stated that the government saw no reason why the missionaries in question should be exempted, and that they did not think that there was any need to issue a statement regarding the British missionaries.<sup>213</sup>

In May 1964, General Abboud went on his first state visit to Great Britain. This sparked some reactions from British members of the CMS. General secretary of the CMS John Taylor was quoted in *The Times* as saying that some members called Abboud's visit repugnant, on grounds that the expulsion of missionaries constituted an affront to basic human rights and liberties.<sup>214</sup> In the aftermath of the state visit, Brian de Saram, then Africa Secretary of the CMS, wrote a detailed report describing the reception on May 27<sup>th</sup>. In this report de Saram

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<sup>211</sup> Christopher Cook, «A note on the Expulsion of Missonaries from the Southern Sudan», 08.31.1977, SAD 804/8/67

<sup>212</sup> Letter from Bishop Allison to Ministry of the Interior, 05.03.1964, SAD 804/9/1-2

<sup>213</sup> Reply from Hassan A. Abdalla to Bishop Allison, 1964, SAD 804/9/3

<sup>214</sup> The Times 25.5.64, titled "Angry Reaction to Sudanese Visit", cited from Makki 2007, p. 104

outlines who he saw and talked to, their role, and above all what threat they posed to the ECS in the future. De Saram for example describes his encounter with General Hassan Beshir Nasr as: “[He] gave me a cold, hard, look and passed on. He is the strong man behind Abboud and believed to be responsible for the “tough” policy in the South. He is the real enemy”. On his meeting with another officer in Abbouds party, General Magboul, he is described as a:

...big, fat man, well-known in the Sudan, and easy to pick out in a crowd. I accosted him and told him I was a CMS missionary. He was drunk, and launched into a long story of what Mao Tse Tung said to him in China. I would assess him as a dangerous fool, enemy No.2 after Hassan Beshir.

Parts of this report also shows de Saram trying to find out if the recent reporting in the British press and quotes from CMS members had provoked the President and his party. In conversation with James Bol Kalmal, who was one of the few southerners in Abboud’s party, de Saram asked if the statements had provoked the President. While Kalmal doubted that he had time to be aware of the statements yet, he instead stated that they he felt that the comments would help the south be “*tremendously re-assured that we had not forgotten them and thrown them away*”. De Saram finally tracked down president Abboud, describing their meeting:

...The poor man was being shepherded around by a posse of officials, with introductions every inch of the way. He must have been incredibly confused by it all... He does not understand English easily and I had to bellow in his ear. “I am afraid we differ on many things, but I hope we remain friends.” He grinned, and said “Yes, yes, of course we remain friends”. He was friendly, and I think he is basically a benevolent father figure. He is not the villain of the piece. I think in dealing with him, we would find moderation of outlook. The danger comes from Hassan Beshir.<sup>215</sup>

This report shows the CMS, and in extension the ECS, actively strategizing how to impose some grade of influence with the government. As we have seen, the ECS had since 1960 tried to cultivate a personal relationship and link with General Abboud. This link had been successful in granting some breakthroughs in the interest of the ECS, for example the softening of some of Governor Baldo’s policies in Equatoria, but by 1964 it appears as though the ECS is increasingly aware of the strongmen behind Abboud as the major factor in the policies impacting the church, such as the government’s southern policy. However, in the

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<sup>215</sup> Brian de Saram, report titled «Reception for General Abboud», 27.05.1964, SAD 804/1/6-7



interest of upholding a relationship with the government, an open line to the President appeared to be the best outlook.

By 1964, the civil war, which will be discussed in the next chapter, had erupted, and led to massive demonstrations among the Sudanese population and excessive use of force against the protestors caused the government to lose control; by the end of October the Military Government had resigned. With this, the link to General Abboud had disappeared, thrusting the ECS into an uncertain future in the country. For the church, the events and restrictions of missionary activity up to 1964 had caused big changes in its organization. It was, however, not a crushing blow. One reason was that the ECS since the repeal of the British Southern Policy had made extended efforts to Sudanize the church and limit the influence of British missionaries; this effort is the main reason that the expulsion of foreign missionaries in 1964 had limited impact. While the plans of the ECS undoubtedly were affected by the act – John Parry, for example, was poised to head parts of the Southern Archdeaconry before his expulsion in 1961 – the expulsion led to further Sudanization of the church in the south instead of relying on British missionaries. Writing in 1999, Abe Enosa describes the expulsion of missionaries in the following manner:

Perhaps the expulsion of the missionaries had been one of the disguised blessings Christianity ever received in the Sudan: a large number of Christian adherents left the Sudan for East Africa thus exposing the suffering of the Church to the world. A second unforeseen blessing was that the North saw its mistakes although the Southern politicians, in the attempt to solve common a problem [sic] had started badly – with divided opinion. Lastly, like a repeat of the “Feeding of the 5000”, the expulsion of the missionaries led to a multiplication in the Church. Pastors, lay readers, women leaders and evangelists took responsibility for doing the work of God. This led to a dramatic growth in the Church.<sup>216</sup>

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<sup>216</sup> Enosa 1999, p. 96

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## CHAPTER 5

### **The Episcopal Church and the first Sudanese civil war 1964-1969**

#### *Organization of the southern resistance*

During Abboud's Military Government, many of the mutineers of the 1955 Torit mutiny had continued their fight from exile. The government's tactics to hunt down the mutineers had initially been relatively unorganized, but in the late 1950s and early 1960s the government's actions became more severe and hard-hitting, including burning of villages. This wave of repressive actions from the government, including the policies of Arabization and Islamization in the south, led to a number of educated southerners and senior political figures leaving for the bush or exile in neighboring countries. Here they met up with the remaining mutineers and established an exile political movement, eventually called the Sudan African Nationalist Movement, or SANU.<sup>217</sup>

SANU as an extension of its predecessor SACDNU (Sudan African Closed Districts National Union)<sup>218</sup> was founded in Kampala, Uganda in 1963 by the three southerners William Deng,

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<sup>217</sup> Johnson 2003, p. 31

<sup>218</sup> According to Poggo, the change of name was a result of the fact that the name SACDNU was «supposed to speak for itself», this however failed because of the fact that few outside Sudan knew what a «closed district» was – thus forcing the change to SANU.

Joseph Oduho and Father Saturnino. The group had envisioned a military movement based in the south as a deterrent to the northern Sudanese army's actions in the south. They further planned a guerilla movement that would use an effective propaganda machine to win the support of southern intellectuals, the southern soldiers in the Sudanese army, students in southern schools, remnants of the Equatoria Corps and others.<sup>219</sup> In August 1963 the leaders of SANU as well as southern politicians and military leaders met in Kampala to conceive of a military plan for the guerilla resistance in the south. Participating in this meeting was among others Joseph Lagu, a former officer in the Sudanese army who defected after having been personally contacted by Oduho.<sup>220</sup> Together the group settled on naming the new and organized guerilla movement *Anyanya*, a combination of the Madi word *inyanya*, a type of snake poison, and the Moru<sup>221</sup> word *manyanya*, meaning army ant.<sup>222</sup>

Before 1964, Anyanya attacks were few and far between, mostly hitting isolated police posts. In January 1964 the first substantial attack happened in Bahr al-Ghazal, when an armed Anyanya force attacked Wau, killing more than a dozen soldiers and capturing automatic weapons, before being forced to withdraw after the leader of the offensive was captured. Following this event, the Anyanya launched sporadic attacks on soldiers throughout the south. In 1964 the Anyanya were fragmented, consisting of about 5000 men in dispersed units, often ignoring the commands of the SANU. In October 1964 SANU arranged a "National Convention" in Kampala, where Lagu was appointed commander-in-chief of the Anyanya.<sup>223</sup>

### *The October revolution*

Even through the Anyanya by 1964 were nowhere near strong enough to challenge the Military Government in Khartoum, its sporadic attacks did much to highlight the Southern Problem for the public in the north as well as the government's inability to neutralize the rebels. To deal with the growing demands of political, economic and social change, the government in September 1964 appointed a commission tasked with investigating the causes of southern unrest and propose solutions. This commission invited public discussion of the

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<sup>219</sup> Poggo 2002, p. 63

<sup>220</sup> Poggo 2002, p. 63-4

<sup>221</sup> The Moru people is an ethnic group mainly confined within Equatoria in the south.

<sup>222</sup> Collins 2008, p. 80

<sup>223</sup> Collins 2008, p. 80

southern problem, but when the students' union at the University in Khartoum concluded that no solution was possible with the Military Government in place, the Ministry of Education banned further meetings at the University. This order was not followed by the students, and when the government on October 21<sup>st</sup> responded to protests at the University by fatally shooting two students, the protests quickly became an emerging revolution.<sup>224</sup>

The events of the October revolution quickly unraveled following the shootings. On the following day, October 22<sup>nd</sup>, the funeral procession of Ahmad al-Ghurashi Tara – one of the students killed – escalated into mass protests, gathering more than 30.000 people.<sup>225</sup> The protests spiraled out of the government's control, even when the army was called upon to deal with the situation. On October 25<sup>th</sup> a new organization called the "National Front for Professionals (NFP)" was hastily formed, consisting of teachers, engineers, lawyers and doctors, and the group was quickly joined by the trade unions in calling for a general strike. The ensuing strike paralyzed Khartoum and many provincial towns. The protests deeply divided the military, with junior officials siding with the protestors, and senior officers wanting to stomp out the revolution by force.<sup>226</sup> After another 20 deaths in the protests, General Abboud on October 26<sup>th</sup>, only a week after the death of al-Ghurashi, announced the dissolution of the Supreme Council. After four days of negotiations, the Transitional Government was formed, and on November 14<sup>th</sup>, 1964, General Abboud quietly left his post.<sup>227</sup> The Military Government was history.<sup>228</sup>

### *The Transitional Government and the southern situation*

The leftist Transitional Government from 1964 carried out and planned a number of radical measures and policies to impose socio-political and economic reforms in the Sudan. During its tenure the government among other things gave women universal suffrage rights at 18 years; established a committee for the purpose of purging corrupt officials from the civil and

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<sup>224</sup> Holt and Daly 2011, p. 155

<sup>225</sup> Sidahmed 1996, p. 74

<sup>226</sup> By coincidence, this paragraph was written during in April 2019, during the Sudanese protests that eventually led to the ousting of President Omar al-Bashir. However much the Sudan has changed since 1964, there are still many parallels between the October Revolution and the still evolving situation in 2019.

<sup>227</sup> Abboud's departure appears to have been extraordinarily civil; Collins for example notes that the day after he left his post, Abboud was cheered by shoppers while he was buying oranges at the market in Khartoum (Collins 2008, p. 81).

<sup>228</sup> Collins 2008, p. 81

military services, and reinstated freedom of press and lifted the state of emergency. It would, however, be short-lived – by February 1965 the government was ousted in favor of a second caretaker government with a traditionalist majority.<sup>229</sup>

These developments happened for a number of reasons. Firstly, the main forces of the revolution were, as we have seen, the NFP. This organization was, however, not a cohesive unit, but a collection of different ideologies; radicals, liberals, communists, Muslim Brothers and Arab Nationalists. Even though the group was ideologically diverse, the main executive positions were occupied by communists, which led to internal strife in the organization during its short tenure.<sup>230</sup>

Secondly, in order to establish the Transitional Government, the NFP united with a new group, named the United Nationalist front. This group included the main political parties in the North: Umma, both the National Unionist Party (NUP) and its fraction Peoples' Democratic Party (PDP), the Sudanese Communist Party and the Muslim Brothers, now organized under the name of the Islamic Charter Front (ICF).<sup>231</sup> These parties had since Abboud's ban on political parties in 1958 been almost disbanded, with the exception of the Communist Party, which already had a cohesive underground network. The disintegration of the traditional parties led to them not to be fully able to participate in the October Revolution, causing them to be outnumbered in the newly-formed Cabinet, with eight cabinet members from the civilian NFP, one from each of the traditionalist parties, and two from the Southern Front.<sup>232</sup>

This division in government quickly became apparent. The NFP and the Communist Party saw this as a chance to be able to implement radical changes in the political and economic system of the country. The traditionalist parties, however, saw the October revolution as a chance to get back in government and proposed a general election at the earliest date

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<sup>229</sup> Sidahmed 1996, p. 78-81

<sup>230</sup> Sidahmed 1996, p. 81

<sup>231</sup> Sidahmed 1996, p. 76

<sup>232</sup> Collins 2008, p. 82

possible.<sup>233</sup> The Professionals' attempts to impose radical policies was viewed as direct threats to the traditionalist parties. For the parties, the purging of military and civil services, in addition to a program that would root out unlawful enrichment was a threat, as many of the officials had remained loyal or had vested interests with them.<sup>234</sup> Lastly, the situation in the south remained a contentious issue, complicating both implementation of policies and the plans for a general election.

Even though the October revolution had consumed most of the attention of the northern politicians, an incident on December 6<sup>th</sup>, 1964 turned the attention yet again to solving the southern problem. The spark was lit when a demonstration of southerners was gathered to welcome Clement Mboro, who was recently appointed Minister of Interior as the first southerner holding a cabinet post, back to Khartoum from a tour in the south. When Mboro's plane was delayed, rumors started among the southerners that he had been killed. This led to widespread riots among the southerners, who rushed into the city, killing almost a hundred northerners in retaliation.<sup>235</sup> This event, dubbed the "Black Sunday", highlighted the need for a settlement with the south – the version of the events given by SANU in its magazine *Voice of Southern Sudan*, further emphasizes the difference of opinion represented from the two sides:

...The incident occurred when Southerners, mobbed at the Airport to receive their Minister, were booed and abused by Northerners, and under rage broke into violence... During the clash 14 people lost their lives and more than 400 wounded. Later figures put the death toll at more than 40 people and about 600 injured. But troubles continued with Northerners in Khartoum and Omdurman rushing to kill any Southerner they met in the streets.<sup>236</sup>

As soon as the Military Government had been toppled, SANU had written to the Transitional Government, proposing a conference to negotiate a mutual settlement. SANU had a number of conditions for this offer; an amnesty for southern refugees, the repeal of the Missionary Societies Act, and the recognition of SANU as a political party. In the aftermath of the Black Sunday the government granted an amnesty for all southerners who had fled the country since

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<sup>233</sup> Holt and Daly 2011, p. 156

<sup>234</sup> Sidahmed 1996, p. 78

<sup>235</sup> Collins 2008, p. 82-3

<sup>236</sup> Voice of Southern Sudan no. 4, Feb. 1965. [https://sudanarchive.net/cgi-bin/pageesso? a=pdf& d=DwmrgdN13\\_24.1.12& dl=1& sim=Screen2Image](https://sudanarchive.net/cgi-bin/pageesso? a=pdf& d=DwmrgdN13_24.1.12& dl=1& sim=Screen2Image) WEB: 23.04.19

1955. The conference proposed was, however, delayed due to an escalation of fighting around Juba, and split between southern political leaders on terms of agreement and the location of the conference.<sup>237</sup>

The conference, later known as the “Round-Table Conference”<sup>238</sup> came too late for the leftist-majority Transitional Government: After the Professionals had argued for the postponement of a general election due to the situation in the south, Umma brought its 30.000 “Ansar youth” militia to Khartoum in a show of power in order to force through an election Umma expected themselves and the other traditionalist parties to win. This, together with the tense situation in the south and the division inside the NFP itself, was enough. On February 18<sup>th</sup>, 1965, the Transitional Government gave way to a second caretaker government with a conservative majority, marking an end to the brief, radical political experiment in the aftermath of the revolution.<sup>239</sup>

#### *The ECS and the Transitional Government*

For the ECS in the south, the Transitional Government brought about a newfound sense of optimism. The new Prime Minister – Khatim al-Khalifa – was highly respected among the southerners and thought of as having a profound understanding of the problems in the region. His, as well as the southerner Clement Mboro’s appointment as Minister of the Interior, was by foreign and internal observers hailed as a “*sign of goodwill on the part of the North and a proof of its sincerity towards reaching a peaceful solution*”.<sup>240</sup> At his first ministerial visit to Juba in November 1964, the new Interior Minister held a speech reportedly attracting several thousand spectators, explaining how the government now would prioritize the southern situation:

I come to you with the best wishes from the Prime Minister, my colleagues in the Cabinet, and your Southern brothers and Sudanese fellow citizens in the North who have come to understand the Southern problem in its true perspective at last... [your new government] has recognized, for the first time, in the history of the country that, there are ethnic, cultural and geographical differences between the Northern Sudanese and Southern Sudanese. That, the Southern problem, quoting the words of our new Prime Minister, “is the most urgent national issue of our time, and therefore it must be tackled

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<sup>237</sup> Holt and Daly 2011, p. 157

<sup>238</sup> A more detailed description of the Round-Table Conference will be given below.

<sup>239</sup> Sidahmed 1996, p. 79-81

<sup>240</sup> Beshir 1968 “The Southern Sudan: Background to Conflict” p. 88, cited from de Saram 1992, p. 251

very quickly and energetically”. That, the use of force can no longer solve this complex problem.<sup>241</sup>

Part of the government’s new policy of recognizing a cultural difference between the north and the south, was the restoring of Sunday as day of rest through the southern provinces. This had been a big point of contention for the southerners; de Saram recalls the celebrations of the first restored Sunday at the Cathedral in Juba like this:

The Cathedral was full to capacity with people standing outside. Being a United Service, the prayers were in English, the Sermon in English translated into Southern Arabic,<sup>242</sup> the hymns sung in unison in the various vernaculars, and the Bible reading in five languages. The theme of the Sermon was one introduced to the author in East Africa... “Use only one weapon – Calvary love for all, even for those who oppress you”.<sup>243</sup>

While optimism was high in the south, the southern advisors travelling with Mboro were reportedly more cautious, feeling that it was too early to judge whether the signs of change were likely to be permanent, or that they would be “*mere gestures of appeasement*” in a difficult situation.<sup>244</sup> As we have seen, these doubts were not unfounded – the political situation in the north and the impact of the Traditionalist parties in Khartoum made the radical policies of the Transitional Government object of much resistance. But another factor that made a resolution of the southern situation difficult was the division and fracturing in southern politics.

### ***The 1965 escalation of the Civil War***

#### *Division in the south*

During the end of 1964 and the first months of 1965, tensions were high in southern politics. In November 1964 SANU split into two factions, when three of the leaders tried to oust William Deng, the secretary general, leading him to establish his own branch of the party. Deng decided to make use of the Transitional Government’s reconciliation with southerners

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<sup>241</sup> Speech from Clement Mboro in Juba, nov. 1964, from Voice of Southern Sudan no. 4, Feb. 1965, p. 8-9.

<sup>242</sup> The mention of «southern arabic» here is unclear, but most likely in reference to Sudanese arabic or a regional dialect of the language.

<sup>243</sup> de Saram 1992, p. 251-2

<sup>244</sup> de Saram 1992, p. 252



in exile, heading back to the south to lead a legally recognized SANU as a party inside the national political process. At the same time the other fraction, led by Agrey Jaden and Joseph Oduhu continued to lead their branch from exile in Uganda, keeping the branch outside the northern political sphere.<sup>245</sup>

The Southern Front was part of the United Nationalist Front and a part of government but was increasingly disillusioned with Prime Minister al-Khalifa and the NFP's inability to properly handle the southern situation and the Traditionalist parties' gradual re-emergence as a political force. Early in 1965 the Southern Front sent a memorandum to the Prime Minister, urging the government to act quickly to deescalate the situation in the south. In the memo, the Southern Front warned that:

The way the policy of your Government is being executed is such that, as we observe it, it will not be long before the curve of the old trend of policy towards the South will be completed, and if nothing is done to straighten the already created curve towards the old malicious track, it will not be long before the Southerners shall find themselves where they were before the 21<sup>st</sup> October Revolution.<sup>246</sup>

The memorandum further accused the government of failing to act upon a report from Clement Mboro on the situation in the south and listed a number of instances in which northern troops and police had used deadly force against southerners. In conclusion the Southern Front issued 14 demands to "save the situation in the south". These demands included among other things that the "*government must keep up its courage, the bravery with which it declared its policy towards the south*", that "*it must not heed to the views of the political parties which are wholly responsible for the imperial policy towards the south*", that the killing of innocent people and the burning of villages should be stopped and the military personnel in the south stemming from the Military Government be replaced with southerners. On the continued activities of the Anyanya and other rebel groups, the Front stated that it had "*doing its best to persuade the Freedom Fighters to cease activities but the Government forces still go out to provoke them*". In conclusion, the memorandum postulates that:

The government has either to prove to us that all those things your excellency said were not empty words, in which case you will have to translate them into action, or declare to

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<sup>245</sup> Sidahmed 1996, p. 84

<sup>246</sup> Memorandum from the Southern Front to Prime Minister al-Khalifa, 1965, SAD 809/1/82-6

us that, for one reason or another, your Government has decided to follow the lead of those who are opposed to its policy, so that we may re-adjust ourselves to the actual situation instead of hanging on empty hopes.<sup>247</sup>

### *The Round Table Conference 1965*

The Southern Front's disavowing of the traditional political parties in the north was not an encouraging sign when the Round Table Conference took place in March 1965, since the Traditionalist parties now were in majority in government after al-Khalifa's ousting in the previous month. Since the resignation of the Transitional Government, fifteen member organizations had broken with the Professionals, effectively facilitating its demise and bringing the traditional parties back in power.<sup>248</sup> The conference in March 1965 thus highlighted the differences both between the southern and the northern delegates, and inside southern politics itself. While the Southern Front spoke in favor of self-determination for the south and a plebiscite to give the southern people the chance to determine their relationship with the north, the exiled SANU wanted outright separation, and Deng's faction of SANU demanded a federation. At the same time the Anyanya continued its attacks despite the ongoing conference, effectively showing that none of the southern parties and politicians partaking in the conference held sufficient influence on the rebels to curtail their actions.<sup>249</sup>

The northern politicians, for their part, rejected any form of self-determination in the south, and after ten fruitless days the conference was terminated on March 25<sup>th</sup>, without having been able to reach a unanimous resolution on the constitutional status of the south.<sup>250</sup> To soften the blow of the disappointing outcome, a 12-man committee was established to continue the work. The committee met for six months but did not return a unanimous solution, much because the deliberations according to Collins was "methodically sabotaged" by the representative from Islamic Charter Front, Hasan al-Turabi.<sup>251</sup>

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<sup>247</sup> Memorandum from the Southern Front to Prime Minister al-Khalifa, 1965, SAD-809/1/82-6

<sup>248</sup> Sidahmed 1996, p. 82

<sup>249</sup> Sidahmed 1996, p. 83-4

<sup>250</sup> Collins 2008, p. 83

<sup>251</sup> Collins 2008, p. 84

The failure of the Round-Table Conference was disastrous for the south. The outcome led many southerners to dismiss co-operation with northern politicians as a viable way forward, and the Anyanya with their line of violent resistance became a rallying point. Furthermore, the new government in Khartoum announced partial elections in April 1965, postponed in three southern provinces. This decision again placed the south in the periphery of national politics, and as a result of the postponement a number of northern merchants were elected unopposed as representatives for the south.<sup>252</sup>

The elections of 1965 were boycotted by a number of parties, notably the Southern Front and the PDP, causing Umma and NUP to form a coalition government, effectively reversing to a pre-1958 political situation, with Umma's Mohammed Ahmed Mahgoub as prime minister. The new government's stance towards the southern problem was substantially tougher than the previous government, and during 1965 the conflict in the south erupted with increasing ferocity, worsened by two violent incidents within the first month of Maghoub's government. First on July 8<sup>th</sup>, when northern troops rampaged in Juba, leaving 1400 southerners dead and much of the city in ashes, and three days later in Wau, when government forces attacked a wedding, killing 76 southerners, many from the educated southern elite.<sup>253</sup>

### *The ECS in wartime*

The attacks in Wau and Juba had immediate effects on the church in the south. During the rampage of Juba, Elinana Ngalamu, one of two Assistant Bishops in charge in the south, was about to depart to a meeting in Jerusalem. Ngalamu was ordered by the army to locate to Bishop Gwynne College in Mundri, some 90 miles outside Juba, and await orders. During the night of July 9<sup>th</sup>, according to de Saram, the army however surrounded the College, hunting for the staff, students and the Bishop. Ngalamu, the students and the Principal of the College survived after having been warned of the forthcoming attack, escaping into the bush.

According to de Saram: "*All through the night, Bishop Elinana hid in a hedge, hunted by the troops. At dawn, he slipped away and joined the others*".<sup>254</sup> Having escaped, the Ngalamu met up with Yeremaya, the other southern Bishop, and fled to Kampala, reporting to the

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<sup>252</sup> Sidahmed 1996, p. 85

<sup>253</sup> Collins 2008, p. 86

<sup>254</sup> de Saram 1992, p. 255

Archbishop of Uganda. Thus, the organizational base of the ECS in the south had been sent in exile – for the next seven years, the Sudanese Bishops in the south would have their headquarters in Gulu in Northern Uganda, ministering to southern refugees.<sup>255</sup>

The news of the distressing events in Juba and Wau reached Bishop Allison by telegram. However, Allison only followed the seriousness of the unfolding situation from press reports and “various local sources”.<sup>256</sup> Writing in *Sudan Diocesan Review* in September 1965, Allison recalls and expands upon his views of the events:

Before I left England in July for Geneva and Jerusalem, en route for the Sudan, there were already ominous signs in the Press of trouble looming ahead. News of the new Prime Minister’s announcement over Omdurman Radio that the Army had been given instructions to deal finally with dissidents throughout the South, seemed to indicate an inevitable increase in the bloodshed and suffering. But no one could really have foreseen to what extent and how quickly the whole situation would deteriorate still further... It has been heart-breaking to hear news of more and more people known to oneself personally over the years, who have met their deaths on duty down in the far South. In some cases these men had been sent specifically for duty under the previous Transitional Government. What has happened, therefore, is particularly tragic after the high hopes that were raised for the South and the possibilities of a solution at long last to this most complicated and pressing problem of the whole Sudan. When the whole story is written one fears the destruction of life and property over these past weeks will be a black page in the history of the modern Sudan.<sup>257</sup>

In addition to forcing the two Bishops in the Southern Archdeaconry into exile in Uganda, the escalation of the southern situation also led to widespread destruction, leading the southern congregations to be dispersed. “*It seems that apart from the Province Headquarters and one or two District Headquarters such as Rumbek, hardly any residents are left either in the towns or in the Parish Church Centres.*”, Allison writes, adding that “*All have left for the country-side or to seek refuge outside the Sudan*”.<sup>258</sup> By this time the news of damage to church buildings had begun to travel to the north – Allison reports of the partial destruction of Bishop Gwynne College, as well as the burning of church buildings in the villages of Mundri, Yambio, Akot and Lui. However, these reports were difficult to verify due to a total breakdown of communication links in the south. The Provost of Juba Cathedral, appointed by

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<sup>255</sup> de Saram 1992, p. 256

<sup>256</sup> de Saram 1992, p. 256

<sup>257</sup> SDR Autumn 1965, p. 4

<sup>258</sup> SDR Autumn 1965, p. 4

Allison as his Commisionary in the South, and now one of the only clergies still present in the south, was prohibited from travelling outside Juba to view the damage in the other provinces.<sup>259</sup>

The following years were difficult for the civilians who remained in the southern provinces. In the aftermath of the 1965 attacks the Anyanya swelled in size, with armed police and southern defectors from the military joining the cause. As a response to the increasing support for the Anyanya, the government instigated a policy of “collectivization”, in which much of the remaining population in the south were gathered in confined areas called “Peace Villages”, surrounded by government troops. In Equatoria, for example, the population were confined into 33 of these villages in order to deprive the rebels of food, shelter and support. Diseases were widespread in these camps, reportedly leaving hundreds of people dead from among others malnutrition and cholera, even though this was denied by the government.<sup>260</sup> Only some of the church centers inside the army perimeters were kept operational. Inside the ECS the Provincial Headquarters of Juba, Wau and Malakal were ministered to by a total of nine remaining Sudanese pastors<sup>261</sup>, while four other centers are known to have been administered to by lay evangelists.<sup>262</sup>

### *The Refugee Church*

With the Sudanese Bishops and the administration of the Southern Archdeaconry in Uganda, the extent of Bishop Allison’s responsibilities was large. As a part of the Archdeaconry of Jerusalem, Allison’s ministerial duties covered, in addition to the northern church in Sudan, the areas in the south open for visitation, the refugee camps and re-settlement areas in Uganda, and the Chaplaincies in Ethiopia, Eritrea, Somalia and the former British protectorate of Aden.<sup>263</sup> After the destruction of Bishop Gwynne College, all institutional work and all the religious schools and colleges in the south had come to an halt, causing Allison to use the

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<sup>259</sup> SDR Autumn 1965, p. 5

<sup>260</sup> Collins 2008, p. 86

<sup>261</sup> de Saram 1992, p. 256

<sup>262</sup> Non-clergy evangelists, not officially ordained.

<sup>263</sup> de Saram 1992, p. 257

Anglican theological colleges of Kenya, Uganda and Nigeria as a potential area for the continued training of Sudanese clergy.<sup>264</sup>

In 1965 and 1966 Bishop Allison was several times denied entry by the government into the Southern Provinces, in order to minister to the remaining church members inside the Province Headquarters.<sup>265</sup> The Ugandan refugee camps thus became the most urgent area requiring ministerial duties, as this was Allison's only remaining link to the Southern Archdeaconry and the southern people.<sup>266</sup> In a letter in SDR in spring 1966, Allison reports on being able to meet with his two southern bishops, as well as a number of other clergy on his first visit to the refugee areas in Uganda. In this letter Allison notes that even though they arrived almost empty-handed, the Sudanese clergy looked "*remarkably well*". After consultations with the Ugandan clergy, the Sudanese Bishops and the Sudanese clergy were located to the refugee areas where they were able to minister to their own people. They were also granted the basic salaries of the Ugandan Church and given religious materials such as books and clothing.<sup>267</sup>

In 1966 the total number of Sudanese refugees in the three countries Uganda, Congo and the Central African Republic was estimated to be over 115.000 by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), and church life continued in these new circumstances.<sup>268</sup> In 1968 Allison again was invited to the refugee areas in Uganda and reported that he was pleasantly surprised to find people "*happily settled into their new homes*", and that the Sudanese Christians had built not only houses, but also temporary churches, village schools and farms.<sup>269</sup> According to these reports the organizational aspects of the ECS adapted to the new reality of displacement and dispersion; in the aftermath of the long-awaited treaty of Addis Ababa in 1972 which ended the first Sudanese Civil War, these groups were able to move back and rejoin the church inside the country, with what Isiah Dau from a theological standpoint terms "*great evangelistic zeal and vigor*" after having spent

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<sup>264</sup> SDR Autumn 1965, p. 5

<sup>265</sup> Letter from Bishop Allison to the Minister of the Interior, February 1966, SAD-809/1/76

<sup>266</sup> Even though he was barred from entry to the south, Allison was at least able to see some of the church leaders while his plane was refuelling at Juba airport in November 1965, en route to Uganda. (SDR Spring 1966, p. 4)

<sup>267</sup> SDR Spring 1966, p. 4

<sup>268</sup> de Saram 1992, p. 259

<sup>269</sup> SDR Spring 1968, p. 7

seven years among the Christian movements in Uganda.<sup>270</sup> What is certain is that the return of the refugee church in Uganda would be detrimental to continuing the ECS' growth that had been stunted by the escalation of the war in 1965.

### *Political developments in the north and the south*

While the events surrounding and leading up to the treaty of Addis Ababa will be handled in the next chapter, the way to a peaceful solution for the Southern Problem seemed a long way off in the aftermath of the first Transitional Government and the breakdown of the round-table conference in 1965. The following years were also marred by infighting and political instability in Khartoum. The government of Mahgoub, who as we have seen adopted a hardline stance towards the south, only lasted until July 1966, when he lost a no-confidence vote. It was, however, not his escalation of the southern situation that brought him down, but rather a power struggle with the northern political establishment and especially his personal antagonism to a young, emerging politician named Sadiq al-Mahdi. Al-Mahdi was highly educated both from the Universities of Khartoum and Oxford and had a leading role in the October Revolution. He was also the great-grandson of Mohammed Ahmad, the Mahdi, giving him further credentials as a future leading figure of Umma. Shortly after his 30<sup>th</sup> birthday in December 1965, making him eligible for election to Parliament, al-Mahdi won the parliamentary leadership of Umma, and promptly stepped up his criticism of Mahgoub. With parts of the Umma leadership on his side, as well as their ever-present political rival al-Azhari and the NUP, al-Mahdi just half a year after his election forced through the vote of no confidence, replacing Mahgoub as prime minister.<sup>271</sup>

Even though it lasted only from July 1966 to May 1967, Sadiq al-Mahdi's government instigated a number of policies that would define the political landscape of Sudan and aggravate what was now becoming a serious rift inside Umma's leadership. Al-Mahdi had promised to abandon the sectarian roots of Sudanese politics that had re-emerged in the wake of the October Revolution, but by advocating agrarian and social reforms he provoked the conservative wing of his own party, led by his uncle Imam al-Hadi <sup>272</sup>, religious leader of the

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<sup>270</sup> Dau 2002, p. 56-7 from Nhial 2013 *The Wiley-Blackwell Companion to the Anglican Communion*, p. 200

<sup>271</sup> Collins 2008, p. 88-9

<sup>272</sup> Imam al-Hadi al-Mahdi had succeeded Abd al-Rahman as leader after the latter's death in 1961.

Ansar.<sup>273</sup> Mahdi's main impact was to reintroduce the question of a permanent constitution, by formally appointing a Constitutional Draft Committee to propose a way forward. But before the committee had reached a statement, the NUP yet again shifted their allegiances, this time to al-Hadi's wing of the Umma, and again ousted the Prime Minister, reinstating Mahgoub as leader of a makeshift coalition.<sup>274</sup>

When the Constitutional Committee delivered its draft on the new constitution in January 1968, the result was a compromise between two of the proposals delivered: An Islamic constitution, proposed by Hasan al-Turabi's ICF, and a secular constitution proposed by the southerners. This compromise, proposed by the NUP, called for a constitution with an "Islamic orientation", a pragmatic document calling among other things for freedom of religion and equality before the law, but which also noted that "*the constitution should represent the will of the people and since the majority are Muslims their will should prevail*". This proposition stated that the adaptation of a non-Islamic political system in the country had been the work of despotic rulers with Western culture and orientation.<sup>275</sup> In opposition to this draft were the southerners on the Constitutional Committee and the Muslim leaders of Darfur and the Nuba mountains, all regarding the constitution as a ploy to marginalize the southern, western and eastern population of the Sudan and further consolidate the hegemony of central Sudan and Arabic Islamic culture.<sup>276</sup> Despite their protests, on May 7<sup>th</sup>, 1969, Umma and the NUP simultaneously announced that they had agreed on the policies and principles of the constitution. This would, however, never be promulgated. Years of power-struggles and political ineptitude had caught up with the political elite of Khartoum, when General Ja'faar Nimeiri and his Free Officers took power in a bloodless coup two weeks later, on May 25<sup>th</sup>.<sup>277</sup>

In writing about the political sphere of Khartoum in this period, it is easy to note the almost complete absence of the south and the southerners' agency in the political developments in the capital. Kristine Mo points out in *Contested Constitutions* that it is hard to understand how the political parties in the north could agree on a constitution with an Islamic orientation: As

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<sup>273</sup> Holt and Daly 2011, p. 161-2A1

<sup>274</sup> Collins 2008, p. 89

<sup>275</sup> Warburg 2003, p. 147-8

<sup>276</sup> Warburg 2003, p. 148

<sup>277</sup> Collins 2008, p. 92



the country was in midst of a civil war, they must have realized that the constitution did not stand a chance of being accepted by the south.<sup>278</sup> Promulgating a constitution without the southerners' support would only escalate the situation further. The parties had simply neglected the southern situation and the raging war in order to bolster their political status, wasting "*enormous amounts of time jockeying for positions of individual advantage in their reconciliation meetings, while national crisis kept mounting*".<sup>279</sup> This view is shared by Bona Malwal, southerner and later minister in Ja'far Nimeiri's government. As political instability reigned in the north and the war kept up in the south, Malwal retrospectively writes that:

...no one in or out of the Government cared any more about the burning public problem that confronted the country. The war in the South once again became an affair for the Army and the other security forces. No one, except the Southerners, cared what the army did there.<sup>280</sup>

While the Southern Provinces were neglected by the politicians in Khartoum, it is also important to emphasize that the southern political sphere was not, in any way, a coherent body, but subject to significant infighting and factionalism. As we have seen, SANU had already in 1964 split into two factions, with William Deng's faction attempting to operate from inside the political system of Khartoum. In the aftermath of the failure of the Round Table Conference and the massacres in Juba and Wau in 1965, both Deng's SANU and the Southern Front led by Clement Mboro and Abel Alier, alternately boycotted the successive elections in the south.<sup>281</sup> The southern guerilla groups also experienced problems of disunity in the aftermath of 1965, with an important theme being the lack of a centralized command over the Anyanya. During the mid-60s, the Anyanya split into two main factions, one led by Joseph Lagu and another led by a former mutineer named Emilio Tafeng. Lagu and Tafeng were at odds with each other, often leading to skirmishes and fighting between the factions. In addition to this many other guerilla groups in the south organized themselves into their own "republics", keeping to themselves. The result of this discord was a very unclear political situation – southern exile politicians were often arrested by these factions in the bush if they were suspected of sympathizing with another group.<sup>282</sup>

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<sup>278</sup> Mo 2014, p. 45

<sup>279</sup> Bechtold 1976: "Politics in the Sudan", p. 257, cited from Warburg 2003, p. 149.

<sup>280</sup> Malwal 1981: "People and Power in Sudan", p. 111, cited from de Saram 1992, p. 261.

<sup>281</sup> Johnson 2003, p. 34

<sup>282</sup> Johnson 2003, p. 32-3

In the southern political sphere, the South Sudan Provisional Government (SSPG) was formed in August 1967, with Agrey Jaden, one of the founders of SANU exile, as president, with Tafeng as Anyanya Commander-in-Chief. This group also experienced tribal, religious and personal differences both inside the faction and competition from outside, leading to its disintegration within two years.<sup>283</sup> After having boycotted the last elections, William Deng's SANU was in 1968 persuaded to return to national politics by Sadiq al-Mahdi, who offered to include them in his coalition for the upcoming election. Deng was by many southerners and northerners alike regarded as somewhat of a moderate, but when he was assassinated by the army after returning to the south, many southerners saw this as proof that further cooperation and compromise with the north was impossible.<sup>284</sup>

The political situation in the south by 1969 was thus gridlocked, accentuated by factionalism and infighting both in the military and political spheres of the south, as well as the northern politicians in Khartoum, who often were too caught up in their own political intrigues to be able to sufficiently address the crisis in the south. This situation was not helped by often misleading or contradictory statements coming from the different factions in the south: The Nile Provisional Government, founded in 1969 as the successor to SSPG, for example announced in the space of six months both that it would negotiate with Khartoum, and that it would launch conventional warfare in the south, with Emilio Tafeng not surrendering before he was captured "dead or alive". Only in 1970 were the different southern military factions united under a unitary command by Joseph Lagu, with the political wing subordinated to the military. This united front, the Southern Sudan Liberation Front (SSLF), would be vital to achieve a peace agreement with Khartoum and, at least for the time being, stop the fighting.<sup>285</sup>

### ***The ECS and the Transitional Governments 1965-1969***

As we have seen, the ECS met the aftermath of the October Revolution and the creation of the first Transitional Government with a sense of optimism, but in the space of a few months in 1965 this government collapsed, the initial talks of the Round-Table conference broke down,

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<sup>283</sup> Niblock 1987 "Class and Power in the Sudan: The Dynamics of Sudanese Politics 1898-1985", p. 273

<sup>284</sup> Johnson 2003, p. 34

<sup>285</sup> Johnson 2003, p. 33

and the new government under Mahgoub through its hard-line policies launched a series of strikes aimed at the rebel movement in the south. This led to violent incidents in Juba and Wau, and the displacement of both the church administration and a large part of the population in the Southern Provinces.

The main priorities of the ECS under Maghoub's first government thus appear to have been getting information about the casualties and displacement facing the church, and making efforts to secure its existence, both in the south and the north. In the aftermath of 1965, the ECS found itself in dire need of both resources and personnel, forcing it to appeal for monetary help from international individual sympathizers and Anglican dioceses, bible societies and churches through the SDR.<sup>286</sup> In addition, Bishop Allison's position allowed him to appeal to the World Council of Churches (WCC) for help in rebuilding the church infrastructure in the south and assist in relief efforts in due course – as soon as the Sudan would be governed by a stable government prepared to seek aid from international organizations.<sup>287</sup>

The turbulence of Maghoub's first government appears to have impacted the relations between the church and the government. Writing in SDR following Sadiq al-Mahdis appointment as Prime Minister, Allison summarized Maghoub's government as follows: *"...there have been little direct contact from the Government side, and understanding has been sadly lacking"*. With al-Mahdi's government, this appeared to be changing, as Allison went on writing that: *"Already we have been considerably heartened by a very apparent change of attitude towards the Churches"*.<sup>288</sup>

Sadiq al-Mahdi's term as Prime Minister promised a new approach to the churches of the Sudan. As one of his first actions al-Mahdi instigated a meeting between his Minister of Interior Sayed Abdulla Abdel Rahman Nugdalla and the various heads of churches, including Bishop Allison. This meeting was held in August 1966: In it, Minister Nugdalla offered a reconciliatory stance on church activities in the south, proposing further co-operation both

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<sup>286</sup> «The Situation in Southern Sudan», leaflet included with SDR Autumn 1965, p. 1-3

<sup>287</sup> Letter from Bishop Allison to the WCC, 08.04.1965, SAD 809/1/72-3

<sup>288</sup> SDR Autumn 1966, p. 10

between the government and the churches, but also between Islam and Christianity in order to build a more harmonious society:

Referring particularly to the needs of the South for “religion” (and he referred to the fact that there are many pagans biduin [sic]) the Minister made it clear that, as far as he was concerned, he wished all such people to be taught religion and would appreciate the work of Churches in teaching them Christianity... “Let us all work together” he said “for the sake of religion. His final word was that we all wished to build up a clean God-fearing society, and that was where Islam and Christianity could co-operate for the welfare of the people.

Nugdalla also stressed the government’s general support of training Sudanese church leaders, and offered every assistance in not only the opening of schools and theological colleges, but also assisting in the training of Sudanese clergy outside the Sudan. This offer prompted the following comment in the transcription of the meeting: “*The impression one get was that he had little understanding of the past training that had been done, both inside and outside the Sudan of our Bishops and clergy and other Church workers*”. At the same time the Minister appealed to the leaders to encourage the return of the refugees, particularly the priests displaced after 1965, and asked the churches to let them know of the government’s desire to return to peaceful conditions and to “*co-operate in the restoration of confidence*”.<sup>289</sup>

This encouragement from the government to urge the refugees in Uganda to return became an issue that shows the difficult position that the ECS found itself in at this point in time; in which every decision could be attacked by a myriad of sides in the south. Attempts at co-operation with the government could be seen as treasonous for many of the Christians still interned in government-controlled closed areas in the south or still in exile outside the country; too vocal support of the southern political groups could thwart any hope of co-operation with the government in order to help the efforts of normalization of the south and the safe return of the refugees from Uganda. The ECS was thus left in the position of having to thread carefully in order to advance the church and the security of the southern people. After the ousting of Sadiq al-Mahdi in May 1967 and with it his first efforts of reconciliation, the situation did not become easier.

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<sup>289</sup> Notes from a meeting between Interior Minister and heads of churches, August 8th, 1966, SAD/809/1/90

An example of the ECS' precarious position in this period can be found in the backlash to Bishop Allison's visit to the refugee camps in Uganda in the autumn of 1967. As we have seen, the government under Abboud had in 1964 issued a general amnesty for the mutineers of 1955, who were allowed to return to the south and settle in one of the army-supervised "peace villages". This policy was further expanded with the "Indemnity acts" of 1966 and 1967, designed to encourage the return of the Sudanese refugees in neighboring countries.<sup>290</sup> When Allison then visited the camps in Uganda in 1967, this tour was covered in the East African press, particularly in Kenyan newspaper *Daily Nation* as a trip designed to persuade the refugees to return to the Sudan under something called the "New Amnesty".<sup>291</sup> This coverage immediately sparked criticism from the political groups in the south, and in particular the South Sudan Provisional Government (SSPG), who in a statement sent to Bishop Allison referenced the meeting between Sadiq al-Mahdi's government and the church leaders in 1966, and its ideal of normalizing relations with the churches like this:

Mr Sadiq like any of the Arab leaders had a mistaken belief that the Southern Rebellion was backed by the churches and to put an end to it, the churches must be neutralized and isolated... Since then, a number of events have taken place in which some churches were involved in subversive activities against the Southern Sudan Liberation Movement.

Specifically, the statement singled out Bishop Allison's recent trip to Uganda:

The refugee problem is an integral part of the Southern Sudan Question and for Bishop Allison to allow himself to be used by the Arabs to persuade the refugees to go back under uncertain terms is an hostile act against the Southern people and the Southern Sudan Liberation Movement... If the churches are satisfied with the religious liberties and privileges promised to them by the Arabs provided they did not do so at our expense, they should keep out of the Southern Sudan Political problem. The churches should understand that ours is a political problem and unless it is satisfactorily solved, we shall continue to struggle against the Arabs even if the Arabs are all converted to Christianity.

Further on, the statement goes on to accuse some priests in the south of giving money to individual leaders in order to create division, causing a serious setback to the freedom movement, and concludes by urging the church leaders to desist from sabotaging the southern cause:

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<sup>290</sup> Loescher 2001 «The UNHCR and World Politics: A Perilous Path», p. 148.

<sup>291</sup> Letter from the SSPG to Bishop Allison, p. 1, 06.01.1968, SAD/804/9/8

We, therefore, call upon the Foreign Missionaries and some of the Sudanese church leaders to refrain from Subversive activities to our movement and to desist from being used by Arab Colonialists as sabotaging agents... We also warn that if the hostility of Foreign church leaders continue, the reaction of the Southern people might have a serious repercussion on the future of the church as a whole and in such an event, the foreign church leaders shall bear the full responsibility.<sup>292</sup>

Writing in SDR in March 1968, Bishop Allison rebutted the east African media reports on his purpose for visiting the camp in Uganda, stating that his purpose simply was to visit the Bishops and Pastors at their work in Uganda, and the students in training. He further noted that *“All of those whom I met expressed a longing to return as soon as there was a political settlement. There is still widespread fear so long as there is a state of emergency in the South”*.<sup>293</sup> What this example shows, is the polarization in place in the political landscape of Sudan in the midst of a civil war, and the problems facing the ECS in helping the displaced church in east Africa and keeping its infrastructure in place in the war-torn south.

In an essay included in *“But God is Not Defeated”* celebrating the centenary of the ECS, Festus Ufulle Ga-Aro, ECS member and scholar, writes that Bishop Allison’s decision to not speak out loudly against the brutality shown by the government in the south led to deep dissatisfaction among the southern Sudanese Christians, who felt that by remaining silent the Bishop indirectly condoned the violence. He further concludes that the ECS made *“little or no contribution to the process of peacemaking during the first civil war”* because the priority of the ECS was to *“mend relationships with the central government rather than to establish a firm foundation for peace”*.<sup>294</sup> This conclusion can be seen as a result of Bishop Allison and the ECS’ efforts in the aftermath of the escalation of the Civil War in 1965 to secure the further existence of the church by focusing on monetary relief to the refugees in Uganda, as well as trying to co-operate with the government in order to secure the future of the existing church structure inside the Sudan.

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<sup>292</sup> Letter from the SSPG to Bishop Allison, p. 2 06.01.1968, SAD/804/9/9

<sup>293</sup> SDR Summer 1968, p. 7

<sup>294</sup> Ufulle 1999 “Building Bridges: The ECS Contribution to Peacemaking and Conflict Resolution” in *But God is Not Defeated*, p. 166

As we have seen from the correspondence from the SSPG to Bishop Allison, the ECS' decision to, in some degree, co-operate with the government about the return of refugees from Uganda, was – however accurate the information given from the East African media – not received well by the different political groups in the south; nor was, as Festus Ufulle describes, the decision to not explicitly condemn the government's actions in the south. An aspect of this is that Bishop Allison's personal position that the Sudan should be a united country, which first and foremost meant that the ECS worked towards a goal of reconciliation as a solution to the southern crisis.<sup>295</sup> The political developments in the north, however, prevented the possibility of a peaceful reconciliation.

The optimism in the aftermath of the October revolution and the 1964 Transitional Government had by 1965 faded as a result of the return of the Traditionalist parties and Maghoub's hardline policies in the south. When Sadiq al-Mahdi assumed the position of Prime Minister in 1967, he again tried co-operation as a means to de-escalate the southern situation. In the meantime, however, the political groups in the south were even more divided, both in terms of if they should participate in the northern political system, as well as the future constitutional status of the south. Even though al-Mahdi's statements on the south appeared to be more inclusive and less uncompromising than his predecessor, it appears as though the window for achieving peaceful reconciliation within the existing political structure already was already shut by this time, due to the sheer division in the country and the previous government's actions. The ECS' reconciliatory strategy of trying to maintain the relationships both with the government and the political groups in the south thus meant that it was able to secure that the church in itself survived the crisis in the south; it can only be speculated what repercussions would have come from Maghoub's government if the ECS had come out more vocally in condemning the government and in support of the southerners cause. At the same time this strategy led to a feeling of disappointment and betrayal among many southern Christians, who felt that their suffering was being ignored.

The political situation in the aftermath of Sadiq al-Mahdi's removal as Prime Minister in 1967 did, as we have seen, deteriorate further, marked by political infighting and the insistence of an Islamic constitution universally rejected by the south. By this time the division between

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<sup>295</sup> Ufulle 1999, p. 166

south and north, as well as the different groups within, meant that some kind of reconciliation and a peaceful solution in the south could only be achieved through fundamental systemic changes to end the political deadlock in the north: This occurred in May 1969 with Ja'far Nimeiri and his Free Officers' military coup. Nimeiri's policies in his first years would allow both sides to the negotiation table and allow the churches through the World Council of Churches a significant role in the mediation. This process was not to be an easy one.



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## CHAPTER 6

### **The Episcopal Church under Ja'far Nimeiri 1969-1972**

The military coup by a group of junior army officers led by Colonel Ja'far Nimeiri on May 25<sup>th</sup>, 1969 was, as outlined in the previous chapter, a result of several political processes. Not only the stagnation of the political sphere in Khartoum and the prospect of an Islamic constitution, but also the fact that the leftist, the Arab Socialists and Arab Nationalists had been overtaken politically by the Islamic-oriented forces including the Traditionalist parties – the Umma, DUP and ICF. Within its first weeks, the new Military regime had proclaimed itself not as a successor of General Abboud's government, but rather as a continuation of the October revolution, with many of the personalities from the first Transitional Government reinstalled in cabinet positions, composing a coalition of Communists and the aforementioned Arab Socialists and Nationalists.<sup>296</sup>

In the immediate aftermath of Nimeiri's coup, the new regime installed strict censorship on the media, and outlawed political parties; opposition from some of the Traditionalist parties were affectively squashed by placing leading politicians, including al-Azhari and Maghoub under house arrest, while senior officials in the army were retired.<sup>297</sup> Nimeiri and the Free Officers were committed to wide-reaching social and economic reform; inspired by Nasser's

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<sup>296</sup> Sidahmed 1996, p. 113-14

<sup>297</sup> Holt and Daly 2011, p. 166

Egypt they from 1969 imposed state monopolies on imported and exported commodities, and by June 1970 they had nationalized almost all companies in the Sudan.<sup>298</sup>

### *Political resistance and coup attempts*

In June 1969 Sadiq al-Mahdi was arrested, leaving the conservative Umma opposition in the hands of Imam al-Hadi, who did not hide his disdain of Nimeiri. In a challenge to the president, al-Hadi in March 1970 staged a large-scale protest of the Ansar in Omdurman. The protest was only quelled after a crackdown from the army, which led to destruction of property and heavy casualties on both sides. Nimeiri's response was swift and brutal; on March 27<sup>th</sup>, he unleashed his elite forces on Aba Island, Ansar and the Umma's stronghold and spiritual home. They were outnumbered by superior arms and firepower of the Government forces. When this operation was over, more than 12.000 Ansar had been killed, and the holdings of the Mahdi family confiscated. Sadiq al-Mahdi managed to escape into exile. With this act, Nimeiri had effectively eradicated Umma as a political power, and consolidated his position.<sup>299</sup>

While the political opposition to Nimeiri's regime was silenced, the first years of his presidency saw infighting in the relatively loose coalition of leftist forces that had carried out the May revolution and installed Nimeiri as president. The period 1969-71 saw a deterioration in the relations between Nimeiri and the communist wing of his new coalition, who felt that Nimeiri strayed too far from their proposed program. From 1970 Nimeiri gradually removed communist influence from his government; first by removing three members of his cabinet and arresting leading civilian communists in November, followed by a public declaration in early 1971 calling for the Sudanese people to "*destroy the communist movement*".<sup>300</sup>

Nimeiri's conflict with the communists came to a conclusion on July 19<sup>th</sup>, 1971, when Major Hashim al-Atta staged a military coup supported by the communist wing, including the government figures Nimeiri had deposed in November 1970. Nimeiri himself was arrested

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<sup>298</sup> Collins 2008, p. 98

<sup>299</sup> Collins 2008, p. 98

<sup>300</sup> Holt and Daly 2011, p. 168

and imprisoned, and a new government was announced along with an agricultural and industrial revolution to replace capitalist development. When the coup ultimately failed, it was partly because the communists had underestimated popular support for the coup in the population. When al-Atta allowed for a demonstration in support of the communists to march through the streets of Khartoum the morning of the coup, this only provoked the already existing animosity and hostility towards the communists that Nimeiri had used to his favor. Thus, the military garrison of Khartoum stayed loyal to Nimeiri, and troops from other parts of the country prepared to march on the capital. On July 21<sup>st</sup> Nimeiri was liberated after loyal troops stormed the People's Palace where he was being imprisoned. The next day the coup was halted, and power restored to Nimeiri.<sup>301</sup>

Another reason for the ultimate failure of al-Atta and the communist coup was their complete misjudgment of the reaction from the neighboring states of Egypt and Libya, who did not support them. Egyptian President al-Sadat instead ordered Egyptian air force to fly in Sudanese troops from the Suez Canal to Khartoum. When two of the leading figures behind the coup, Babikr al-Nur and Farukh Hamdallah tried to leave the country on a BOAC plane bound for London, the plane was intercepted by Libyan jets on orders from Muammar Gaddafi and ordered to land in Tripoli.<sup>302</sup> Al-Nur and Hamdallah was subsequently arrested, handed over to Nimeiri and promptly executed.<sup>303</sup>

### *The southern question and the road to peace*

As we have seen, the stalemate and political ineptitude concerning the southern question was, at least, part of the background leading up to the coup in 1969. After gaining power, one of the first declarations of the new regime was the "June Declaration", in which Nimeiri recognized the existence of a historical and cultural difference between the north and the south, and the south's right to some regional autonomy. Furthermore, a Minister of Southern Affairs was appointed.<sup>304</sup> The start of Nimeiri's presidency was thus met with cautious

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<sup>301</sup> Collins 2008, p. 101

<sup>302</sup> Coincidentally, Bishop Allison was aboard the flight that was diverted to Tripoli, describing the incident as: «A really dirty trick, but what can one expect from men as Gaddafi? Who would want to be president these days? ...Poor Sudan! This is not the end of the story». Letter from Allison to Martin Parr 24.07.1971, SAD 809/2/41

<sup>303</sup> Collins 2008, p. 101

<sup>304</sup> Sidahmed 1996, p. 114

optimism that a solution to the southern problem could be found, but the president himself was not prepared to grant the south autonomy; moreover, all but two members of the new cabinet were former army officers in the south, and their initial approach towards the south was to better arm the army in order to obliterate the “mutiny”. While the communists in the cabinet argued for southern autonomy, they were ignored; when the Minister of Southern Affairs, Abel Alier, argued that the southern problem was a political, not a military conflict, and that dialogue should be started with the Anyanya, he was scorned by both Nimeiri and other high-level government officials in the Council of Ministers.<sup>305</sup>

In the Southern Provinces the situation by 1969 was one of political strife, but in 1970 Col. Joseph Lagu managed to obtain control over the Anyanya, and unite it under his leadership, reorganizing the organization under the name “*Southern Sudan Liberation Movement (SSLM)*”. Pivotal to Lagu’s consolidation of the Anyanya was his personal relationship with the Israeli government, offering to open the southern Sudan as a second front against the Arabs in the aftermath of the Six-Day Arab-Israeli war in exchange for arms. While this idea was well received from the Israeli side, the internal division and power-struggle in southern politics did much to sour their commitment to the deal. By 1968 the Israelis would only deal with Lagu directly. With Lagu consolidating the SSLM, however, the flow of Israeli weapons intensified, and Anyanya officers was sent to Israel for military training.<sup>306</sup>

In the aftermath of the failed coup in 1971, President Nimeiri’s attitude towards talks with the southern resistance began to change, at the same time as the now more-organized southern guerilla forces gave the northern army major military setbacks. This reportedly made Nimeiri conclude that military victory could no longer be achieved, and furthermore that the war then was “*an unnecessary loss of lives and resources at the expense of the country’s development plans*”.<sup>307</sup> Another factor in Nimeiri’s change of heart was the fact that he had lost his entire power base in the aftermath of Atta’s failed coup. Without them, and with the Traditionalist

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<sup>305</sup> Collins 2008, p. 103

<sup>306</sup> Collins 2008, p. 103-5

<sup>307</sup> Interview with Barnaba Dumo Wani, from Poggo 2009, p. 177

Parties outlawed and opposed to him, Nimeiri acknowledged that his only chance of remaining in power was to instigate peace talks with the south and secure it as an ally.<sup>308</sup>

The process of negotiating a peace agreement started with secret talks between the government in Khartoum and southern political leaders in exile. Central in this process was Abel Alier, Minister of Southern Affairs, who early in 1971 was tasked with opening a dialogue with the SSLM. Important mediators here were the World Council of Churches (WCC) and the All-African Council of Churches (AACC). After an initial meeting in January 1971 between Alier and representatives from the SSLM, the parties agreed to meet a year later, a timeframe that for them was used to convince the commanders of Anyanya that the time had come for talks. A unilateral ceasefire ordered by Nimeiri at the same time also much ensured that the coming negotiations in February 1972 could proceed without direct hostility.<sup>309</sup>

The conference in Addis Ababa started on February 27<sup>th</sup>, 1972, with representatives from SSLM and the government, and on March 3<sup>rd</sup> an agreement was made with the “Regional Self-Government Act for the Southern Provinces”. This agreement addressed the southern questions of autonomy by grouping the three southern provinces into a self-governing region with its own assembly and cabinet, with power over among other things local government, education, health and police. Many parts of the agreement were however vague and left many questions unanswered.<sup>310</sup> What this agreement did was to ensure a lasting cease-fire and stop the raging civil war. It also did much to integrate southerners into the political body of the country, both as a region and as genuine political representatives of the south instead of the earlier southern politicians in government, who Sidahmed (1999) broadly describes as “...little more than Southern ‘faces’ in the politics of the ‘North’”.<sup>311</sup>

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<sup>308</sup> Poggo 2009, p. 177

<sup>309</sup> Collins 2008, p. 108-9

<sup>310</sup> Holt and Daly 2011, p. 170

<sup>311</sup> Sidahmed 1996 p. 115

### *The ECS and Nimeiri's first years*

The news of Nimeiri and the Free Officers coup in 1969 was met with cautious optimism, also in large parts of the southern provinces. Almost immediately after the shift in power, Bishop Allison interviewed Major Faruk Hamdallah, Minister of the Interior, the results of which Allison later recalled in SDR. Allison here praised the “*obvious determination*” of the new regime to implement their decisions, commenting that “*the Sudan certainly needed a shake up, and there is a radical change of outlook in the present regime*”. Allison further reiterated a couple of the policies he had learned from Hamdallah. Firstly, it was stated that there would be freedom of religion, thus, as Allison wrote, averting the threat of an Islamic constitution, further quoting the Prime Minister Sayed Awadallah as stating that their policy was that “*Religion is for God and the country for all our citizens*”. Allison on this basis concluded that “*one can therefore thankfully record this decision to treat all religion with equal respect*”.<sup>312</sup>

On the southern situation, Allison also appeared to be optimistic, especially in the aftermath of Nimeiri's June Declaration, in which he had stated that:

The Revolutionary Government is confident and competent enough to face existing realities. It recognizes the historical and cultural differences between the North and South, and firmly believes that the unity of our country must be built upon these objective realities. The southern people have the right to develop their respective cultures and traditions within a united Sudan.<sup>313</sup>

Allison recognized this policy as a radical change in direction from the previous government, and also that the southern policy was more in line with his own conviction that the cultural differences between the sections of the country should be fully recognized, so that “*each culture can bring its distinctive contribution to the common treasury*”. Concluding, Allison wrote that:

...we look forward eagerly to the implementing of this new policy and hope that it will bring a restoration of confidence not only within the heart of the South, but also among the tens of thousands of refugees... Such confidence cannot be restored in a matter of weeks or months, but there are already signs of the beginning of a return to normality in some areas... We only hope and pray that on all sides there will be a deliberate effort to forgive and forget the past, and to build up for the new day. It is here I believe, that the Church has a real part to play.<sup>314</sup>

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<sup>312</sup> SDR Autumn 1969, p. 3

<sup>313</sup> June Declaration, cited in SDR Autumn 1969, p. 4

<sup>314</sup> SDR Autumn 1969, p. 4

For the ECS, the financial situation at the start of Nimeiri's presidency was difficult. Since the escalation of the civil war in 1965 the church had relied on financial help from Anglican dioceses and members around the world, and by 1969 the situation had become a self-described financial crisis, due to loss of important donors. This situation led to a lack of funding for the refugee church in Uganda.<sup>315</sup> When Nimeiri announced a sweeping nationalization of banks and businesses in 1970 this also affected the ECS, and in particular the remaining ex-patriate congregation, leading to about 60 British and their families immediately leaving the Sudan. This had ramifications for the Khartoum congregation, which saw five of the British cathedral staff leaving the country.<sup>316</sup>

The conflict between Nimeiri and the communist wing of the government from 1970 also led to confusion and hardship for the ECS, especially in the aftermath of the failed coup in July 1971. During the fighting in the streets of Khartoum the cathedral was caught in crossfire leading to some damage to the building itself, though none of the personnel associated with it was injured.<sup>317</sup> On July 31<sup>st</sup> Bishop Allison was informed by the Ministry of the Interior that the cathedral, owing to the security situation, was to be closed, and that all religious activities carried out there and in surrounding buildings had to be stopped at once. While this was presented as a temporary measure, it nevertheless left a feeling of bewilderment and shock among the Christian population in Khartoum, who were now left without a central place of worship in the capital.<sup>318</sup>

Throughout the autumn of 1971 the ECS was outwardly expressing confidence that the cathedral situation would be sorted out shortly. By November confidence started to wane, especially after Bishop Allison received an urgent letter from the Ministry of the Interior, informing him that the government had allocated a house on the east side of Khartoum as a temporary "Prayer Place" for the Episcopal Church, a house that after inspection turned out to contain only four small rooms. Allison further informed the Ministry that this solution was

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<sup>315</sup> SDR Spring 1970, p. 8

<sup>316</sup> SDR Autumn 1970, p. 3-4

<sup>317</sup> Message from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office to Bishop Allison, 16.07.71, SAD 809/2/42

<sup>318</sup> SDR Autumn 1971, p. 3-4

considered “*quite unsuitable*” as a place of public worship.<sup>319</sup> In a letter to the Archbishop in Jerusalem, Allison further elaborated on what he, in this regard, deemed to be dishonest intentions from the government:

It is becoming increasingly clear, as many have all along suspected, that there are some in authority who have no intention whatever of letting us have our Cathedral back, and are quite insensitive to the feelings of others. I believe that things are coming to a point of crisis, and would not be surprised if the Sudanese did not take further action to impress upon the Government what they feel to be a clear case of discrimination. I only hope that in the end reason will prevail and that there will be a new understanding, particularly in view of the coming Christmas season.<sup>320</sup>

The start of 1972 saw continued uncertainty about the situation, with the government still refusing to let the cathedral reopen, a period that saw the English-speaking congregation gathering in the sitting room and garden of Bishop Allison’s temporary housing, and the main Sudanese congregation being permitted to gather at different locations such as the Roman Catholic cathedral and the Evangelical Church.<sup>321</sup> In spring 1973 the cathedral was finally sealed off and overtaken by the government, leaving the ECS to rely on “house-churches” and the hospitality of the other churches. Even so, optimism was again on the rise for the ECS, owing to the success of the Addis Ababa Agreement and the prospect of the refugee church returning to the Sudan and rebuilding the demolished churches in the south. In the summer of 1973 Bishop Allison further announced his resignation after 33 years in the Sudan, stating in his in his resignation letter that:

...The loss of our beloved Cathedral is a small price to pay for the saving of probably tens of thousands of lives in the Southern Region as the direct result of President Nimeiri’s return to power, and the consequent Peace Agreement.<sup>322</sup>

### ***Church involvement in the peace negotiations***

The Addis Ababa Agreement was, as we have, seen mediated with the help of the two organizations the World Council of Churches (WCC) and the All-African Council of Churches (AACC). They were able to facilitate contact between the SSLM and the government in Khartoum, ultimately leading to the conference in Addis Ababa in February

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<sup>319</sup> Letter from Bishop Allison to the Archbishop in Jerusalem, p.1, 11.11.1971, SAD 809/2/50

<sup>320</sup> Letter from Bishop Allison to the Archbishop in Jerusalem, p. 2, 11.11.1971, SAD 809/2/51

<sup>321</sup> Letter titled «The Bishop in the Sudan», 1973, SAD 809/4/5-6

<sup>322</sup> Letter titled «Bishop in the Sudan Announces Resignation», 1973, SAD 809/4/28-9



1972. This contact was initiated in May 1971, when President Nimeiri invited a delegation of the WCC and the AACC to the Sudan on a fact-finding mission, which eventually after establishing contact with the SSLM, was able to bring forth the message to the government that the group was ready for negotiations.<sup>323</sup>

The contact between the WCC/AACC and the SSLM was however not facilitated without involvement from a number of groups and mediaries. The visit in 1971 was not the first fact-finding mission by the two groups. Already in 1967 a Goodwill mission of the AACC, including members of the WCC, visited the Sudan at the invitation of then-Prime Minister Sadiq al-Mahdi, at the end which it released a report that called for recognition of southern voices in government and a constitution safeguarding religious freedom, but also for a *“peaceful and conciliatory approach, rather than military operations, to solve the unhappy situation with the outlaws.”*<sup>324</sup>

For the SSLM, the report from 1967 was deemed as biased and harmful for their cause, as it had deemed the rebels as “outlaws” and as a result of this rejecting the legitimacy of its armed struggle. For the delegation in 1971 to succeed in establishing contact with the SSLM, it was thus important for groups closer to them to get a guarantee that the new WCC/AACC delegation would not conclude in a way that would anger the SSLM and potentially hinder the peace efforts. One of the groups that identified this problem was the Kampala Committee, described as a church-sponsored group dealing with medical, educational, agricultural and pastoral aid for the south.<sup>325</sup> The Kampala Committee was able to meet with delegates from the WCC/AACC on May 7-8, 1971, in order to discuss the situation in the south and the way forward in regard to reconciliation and the peace process.

According to the minutes of this meeting, the Kampala Committee had a very strong Anglican element; present at the meeting was not only the Archbishops of Jerusalem and Uganda, respectively George Appleton and Erica Sabiti, but also the two exiled ECS bishops Yeremaya and Elinana Ngalamu, in addition to three exiled Sudanese episcopal priests.

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<sup>323</sup> de Saram 1992, p. 268

<sup>324</sup> de Saram 1992, p. 260

<sup>325</sup> Assefa 2018 “Mediation of Civil War: Approaches and Strategies – The Sudan Conflict”, p. 101

Among the points agreed upon in this meeting was that the delegation should search for an African mediator trusted by both sides, and that both sides should be clear on what they meant by the term “local autonomy”. The minutes further states that the southern representatives of the Kampala Committee would be helpful in creating contact between the parts, saying that:

...If the delegation were able to open up channels of discussion between the Government and the people of the South, the Southerners in Uganda should be willing to make contact with leaders of the An-anya, at the right moment.<sup>326</sup>

Contact between the WCC/AACC delegation and representatives of the SSLM happened on June 6<sup>th</sup>, in a meeting that also included representatives of the Kampala Committee and the Makerere Group, a SSLM-sympathetic group based at Makele University in Kampala. According to Assefa, the SSLM representatives were suspicious of the AACC’s role, again pointing to the report from 1967 as biased, fearing that the government in Khartoum would use the church delegation for propaganda purposes.<sup>327</sup> The prospect of negotiations with the government was, however, not rejected. In the summer of 1971 Joseph Lagu, the SSLM leader, sent a letter to Nimeiri committing the organization to peace, which further convinced the President that the south was ready for negotiations.<sup>328</sup>

Joseph Lagu’s sudden commitment to talks with Nimeiri’s government was however met with surprise by many in the SSLM/Anyanya leadership. A core group of southern politicians committed to an independent southern Sudanese government outright refused the peace efforts, and Dr. Dominic Mohammed, representative of the SSLM in the United States, referenced the southern politicians in favor of Lagu’s plan as “puppets” of the church organizations, who were told what to do.<sup>329</sup> Even so, the WCC/AACC evidently played a pivotal role in drumming up support for the peace talks between 1971 and 1972. On one hand, the church organizations reportedly put pressure on the Nimeiri government; on the other hand, they lobbied incessantly with any available means to convince southern politicians to support the talks. According to Dominic Mohammed, for example, he was contacted in 1971 by Rev. Burgess Carr, secretary-general of the AACC, who tried to persuade him to support

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<sup>326</sup> Minutes from meeting of the Kampala Committee, 8.05.1971, SAD 809/2/29

<sup>327</sup> Assefa 2018, p. 105-6

<sup>328</sup> Poggo 2009, p. 181

<sup>329</sup> Poggo 2009, p. 182

the peace talks, promising Mohammed a ministerial position in the new southern Regional Government if he was to accept.<sup>330</sup>

By the time the negotiations in Addis Ababa started in February 1972 support for the talks had risen in the south. As we have seen, Nimeiri immediately ordered a ceasefire in the aftermath of the preliminary meetings between the government and the SSLM in 1971 which had helped preparing the southerners; constant campaigning by Lagu and his supporters, in addition to the WCC/AACC also did much to increase the chances of the negotiations succeeding. Present for the negotiations was representatives from the SSLM; representatives for Nimeiri's government, including one southerner, Abel Alier; non-Sudanese officials and observers including representatives including Burgess Carr from the AACC and WCC; a representative of the Sudan Council of Churches, and a representative for Haile Selassie, emperor of Ethiopia whom the WCC had persuaded to mediate the talks.<sup>331</sup>

When the negotiations were concluded and the Addis Ababa Agreement completed on March 27<sup>th</sup>, the result was as we have seen a regional autonomy for the south inside a united Sudan, a situation that differed significantly from the goal of southern self-determination that until recently had been presented as a ultimatum for the Anyanya. However, the autonomy contained in the agreement nevertheless made sure that the people of the south for the first time was able to exercise the democratic values in their own legislative assembly. The WCC/AACC has often been referenced as the mediators who made this possible, as the part who, as they had the respect of both parties, *"grasped the complexity of the situation and persuaded the disputants to pursue peace negotiations"*.<sup>332</sup>

Critics of the Agreement have however called out the involvement of the WCC/AACC as biased, and not appearing as impartial peace brokers. In an interview for Poggo's "The First Sudanese Civil War", former Anyanya officer Stephen Madut reiterates his belief that the WCC officials and Carr of the AACC intimidated the SSLM delegates to the point where they became submissive to the northern delegation; echoing this, Dominic Mohammed observed

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<sup>330</sup> Interview with Dr. Dominic Mohammed, from Poggo 2009, p. 182

<sup>331</sup> Poggo 2009, p. 187

<sup>332</sup> Wai 1981 "The African-Arab Conflict in the Sudan", p. 165-6

again that the SSLM delegates was “puppets” of the WCC/AACC, succumbing to pressure from the church organizations, as well as criticizing Emperor Haile Selassie for his role in the negotiations.<sup>333</sup> While the final agreement was broadly being received as a significant step forward, some parts of the Anyanya still viewed the agreement as something they had not endorsed. Stephen Madut further stated in his interview that: *“There was no consensus reached between the Anya-Nya forces and General Joseph Lagu... it was rather an agreement between the Sudan government and World Council of Churches”*.<sup>334</sup>

#### *The ECS’ contribution to brokering the agreement*

While the ECS did not directly take part in the negotiations of Addis Ababa, the church nevertheless used its position as an integrated Sudanese church to influence the results. According to Festus Ufulle, Bishop Allison participated in a conference in Khartoum named the “Relief and Rehabilitation Conference”, held on February 23<sup>rd</sup>, 1972. Also participating in this conference was western relief organizations, the WCC and the AACC. According to Ufulle, Allison here played a pivotal role behind the scenes, by convincing donors to support the outcome of the peace negotiations, lobbying the international community to support the deal as soon as it was signed, as well as taking the role of assuring the representatives of relief organizations that the government was sincere in its efforts to find a honorable solution to the southern problem.<sup>335</sup>

Even though Bishop Allison kept a relatively low profile during the peace talks, the exiled ECS members in the Kampala Committee, including the two southern Bishops Yeremaya and Bishop Elinana played an important part in enabling the WCC/AACC delegation of 1971 to be able to succeed in its mission of opening dialogue with the SSLM. As we have seen, one of the main objectives of the Kampala Committee was to have the WCC/AACC guarantee that their report would not be damaging for the SSLM cause, thus damaging the prospects of peace talks before they had begun. This guarantee was reportedly given at a meeting between the groups in March 1971.<sup>336</sup> With this guarantee in place, the Kampala Committee facilitated

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<sup>333</sup> Poggo 2009, p. 188

<sup>334</sup> Poggo 2009, p. 190

<sup>335</sup> Ufulle 1999, p. 167

<sup>336</sup> Assefa 2018, p. 102

contact between the SSLM and the WCC/AACC delegation in June 1971, opening the door for further negotiations.

It may seem like the ECS in this period operated in two different spheres; while Bishop Allison was in control of the ECS in the north, the southern provinces were still without a central church administration, with the bishops and a majority of the clergy still in exile in Uganda. But Allison also had personal differences with some of the exiled ECS, and in particular Bishop Elinana, who was outspoken in his support of the Anyanya.<sup>337</sup> This differed from Allison's own view of a solution to the southern problem; as noted in the previous chapter, Allison still believed in Sudan as a united country and reconciliation – a message that was in stark contrast with Anyanya's goals.

While Allison was not a part of the Kampala Committee, archive material shows that he was being informed and kept updated on the Committee's dealings. In a letter, also containing the minutes of the Committee's meeting with the WCC/AACC delegation, George Appleton, Archbishop in Jerusalem, comments on the apparent strategy of keeping Bishop Allison and the ECS in Khartoum separate from the process in Uganda:

I had hoped that you might be able to stay on for this weekend meeting and might even be in Khartoum for the visit of the WCC delegation. But you are probably wise to keep out of these quasi-political matters, leaving me to take the initiative and accept the responsibility of any criticisms. We must do nothing to make your relationships with the Khartoum government any more difficult. There may be occasions when you will have to disassociate yourself with what I am trying to do, but we shall understand one another and both be working with the same aims.<sup>338</sup>

It can thus be argued that by keeping Bishop Allison and the ECS in Khartoum detached from the workings in Uganda, the church achieved a number of things. Firstly, the ECS in exile was able to help the peace efforts by communicating directly with both the Anyanya and SSLM, as well as southern politicians without scrutiny from Nimeiri's government. At the same time, they were able to provide the WCC/AACC with links of communication to the SSLM, driving the process forward.

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<sup>337</sup> Ufulle 1999, p. 168

<sup>338</sup> Letter from Archbishop Appleton to Bishop Allison, 11/05/71, SAD 809/2/28

Secondly, the ECS in Khartoum was able to maintain its relations with the government. As we have seen, the church met hardships in 1970 and 1971, mainly from the exodus of ex-pats in the aftermath of Nimeiri's program of nationalization of banks and businesses, and the closure of All Saints Cathedral in the capital. It is easy to imagine that a closer involvement with the Kampala Committee could do much to open Allison and the church up for criticism of being sympathetic to the SSLM or the Anyanya, thus taking a risk of jeopardizing its relations with Nimeiri's government. By co-operating with the government, Allison was also able to be invited to the government-organized Relief and Rehabilitation Conference, using the opportunity to lobby the international community in favor of the Agreement.

While it is difficult to gauge exactly how the efforts of the ECS impacted the peace process, it is evident that both the exiled ECS and ECS Khartoum did some part of driving the process forward, albeit in different ways. For both groups, securing a lasting peace was the main objective, however different their means of achieving it was. As Ufulle concludes in "But God is Not Defeated":

Although there appeared to be some disagreements between the leadership of the ECS inside the Sudan and those in exile leading to a lack of the co-ordination during the Peace Talks, there was a clear common purpose – the unity of the church to achieve peace.<sup>339</sup>

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<sup>339</sup> Ufulle 1999, p. 168

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## CHAPTER 7

### Conclusion

In the introduction to this thesis the main research question was formulated broadly; *How did the ECS relate to the political changes in the Sudan between 1945 and 1972?* Through formulating an extensive historical context on the period, it is evident that each period covered in chapters 3 through 6 brought distinct – but different – obstacles for the ECS, which is represented through three sub-questions also presented in the introduction. Firstly, with the question “*How did the ECS transition from the Anglo-Egyptian Condominium to independent Sudan?*” it is evident that the reversal of the British *southern policy* in 1945 and 1946 led to a strong effort by the government in order to bolster the Southern Provinces, which was lagging behind in educational standards compared to the north. For the ECS, this ushered in a renewed focus on “Sudanization” of the church, by ordaining ingenious southerners as clergy, and trying to establish the ECS as an integral Sudanese church, not an institution left behind by the British.

Chapter four, “*The ECS in Independent Sudan 1956-1964*”, concerned the aftermath of this transition, and showed how the new government nationalized mission schools and increasingly restricted the activities of foreign missionaries, especially in the aftermath of General Abboud’s military coup in 1958. When this policy culminated with the expulsion of foreign missionaries in 1964, this represents the first real test for the young Sudanese church.

However, due to the efforts of indigenization of the church in the years since 1945, only six British missionaries were affected by the order; the church was thus able to survive without relying on foreign missionaries.

The second question, “*How did the ECS relate to the continuous unrest in the Southern Provinces from 1955?*” asks how the ECS, which by the time the civil war escalated in 1965 was a strong presence in the south, related itself to the government in a period when a large number of its southern adherents was at a state of war with Khartoum. As seen in chapter 5, the military crackdown in 1965 eradicated the existing structure of ECS in the south, sending the two Bishops in charge of the Southern Archdeaconries into exile in Uganda, where they ministered to Sudanese refugees. Bishop Allison, confined to Khartoum in this period, embarked on a strenuous task of advocating for a solution to the southern crisis, while still trying to maintain or improve the ECS’ relationship with the government. This proved difficult because of Allison’s personal belief that unification and reconciliation, not southern independence or self-autonomy, was the answer to the crisis. This put his position at odds with the stated objectives of the Anyanya.

At the same time the dysfunctional successive governments in Khartoum and the fragmentation between – and inside – the political and military groups in the south made instigating work on a peace process near impossible. By positioning the ECS between north and south and trying to jockey the interests of the church between the governments in Khartoum and the exiled and displaced church in the south, Allison in many ways found himself in an impossible situation; stuck between a rock and a hard place.

The last question, “*What role did the ECS have in the process leading to the Addis Ababa Agreement in 1972?*” continues this story in the aftermath of Ja’far Nimeiri and his Free Officers’ military coup in 1969, and explains how several political developments coincided to open the possibility of instigating peace talks: Northern political pressure in the aftermath of the failed coup in 1971, and Joseph Lagu uniting southern groups under his leadership in the SSLM. For the ECS, Bishop Allison in Khartoum still continued his position of maintaining relations with Nimeiri’s government. With the WCC/AACC getting involved in the peace



process, evidence suggests that the exiled ECS in Uganda, as well as the Archbishop in Jerusalem in the Kampala Committee used their influence and personal relations to southern SSLM members in order to facilitate contact between them and the church councils. This shows the exiled ECS acting more or less independently from Allison, who was encouraged not to get involved in fear of worsening relations with Khartoum in a critical point in time. Due to this the ECS was able to influence the peace process in two ways. Firstly, by facilitating links to the SSLM, but also, as a result of continuing relations with Nimeiri's government, being able to lobby the international community to accept the Agreement, on behalf of the government.

Was the ECS' relationship with various governments between 1945 and 1972 primarily marked by a management of successive crises, or pragmatic efforts to gain favor? As has been seen throughout this thesis, the ECS several times during this period had to surmount crises befalling the church itself or its provinces of influence. In each of these instances, be it preparing for independence, restrictions of church activity or coping with a civil war, the ECS had to take steps to manage the situation and find a way to adapt to the changing circumstances.

However, the ECS has throughout the period also taken a pragmatic approach, and tried, whenever possible, to obtain favor with the government. This is for example epitomized in how bishop Allison and the ECS handled the deteriorating state of the Southern Provinces after the outbreak of the civil war. However bad the situation got, and whatever government currently in charge, Bishop Allison still tried to maintain relations to Khartoum in search of two objects: Improving the situation in the south, and ensuring the continued survival of the ECS. This combination of responsive measures and continued attempts of relation-building defined the nature of the relationship between the ECS and the various governments in the period, in which the church performed a series of improvisations while carefully maintaining a balancing act between north and south.

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Details of the individual sources used can be found in the footnotes of this thesis, in the format SAD [reference number], which indicates the box number and the individual placement of the source within the collections of the archive.

The archival material used in this thesis stemming from the archive of Rex Seán O’Fahey, deposited at the Bergen Global library and archives, consists of a number of issues of the *Sudan Diocesan Review*, from 1957 until 1971. The specific issues and page numbers used throughout this thesis is detailed in the footnotes. As the magazine was published 2-3 times a year, with a spring, autumn and occasionally a summer edition, the format of this citation is: SDR [season][year],[page number].

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